Why Chyna's Michaels-Helmsley Plan Will Fail

THE WRESTLER

THE Wrestler®

STING FEVER STRIKES!

And The NWO Can't Find The Cure

ALSO INSIDE...

Bret Takes The Heart Out Of Terry Funk

The Real Reason Flair Broke Up The Horsemen

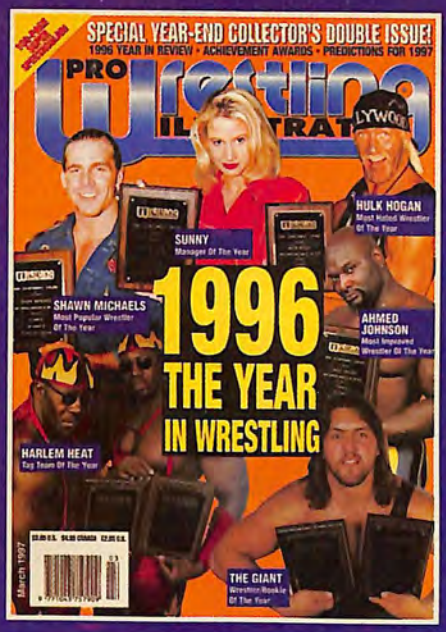
Q & A: The Godwinns

February 1998

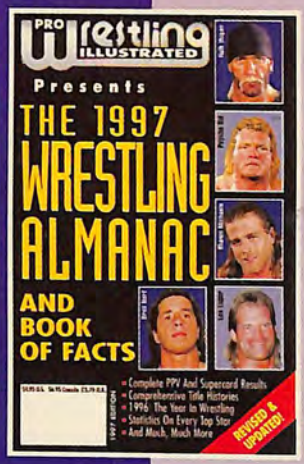
$2.50 U.S. $3.50 CANADA £1.95 U.K.

02

0 71896 00389 5



GET THE PWI ALMANAC FREE WITH YOUR PAID SUBSCRIPTION!



Wrestling fans raved about last year's *PWI Almanac And Book Of Facts*. And now the second edition has been published, completely revised and updated. The editors of *PWI* have put together the ultimate resource tool, combining a complete review of 1996 with a historical overview of the sport. The 196-page, digest-sized edition includes: Complete PPV, supercard, and Clash results ... Complete title histories ... A year-by-year history of the sport ... Stats ... And much more!

The PWI Almanac sold out quickly on most newsstands last year, but now the second edition is yours **FREE** if you use the order form below!

Subscribe to PWI today and receive ...

- 13 issues a year (that's one every four weeks!)
- Up to **25% off** the newsstand price
- Four special **expanded editions**, including the 100-page "Year-End Achievement Awards" and the "*PWI* 500"
- **Guaranteed delivery** right to your home
- And, of course, *The 1997 PWI Almanac And Book Of Facts*

EXCLUSIVE *PWI* FEATURES

PWI's award-winning staff is always where the action is, providing the most complete coverage of wrestling available anywhere. From the great staff of writers, through the dramatic peak-action photographs, to the magnificent full-color centerfold—**PWI** brings you wrestling action at its best. **PWI** includes exclusive features you can't get anywhere else: Our comprehensive "Arena Reports" ... Brandi Mankiewicz' lively and controversial "Off The Top Rope" ...An incisive "Press Conference" with one of the sport's top stars . . . Extensive "Ratings" . . . "Scouting Reports" . . . "Time Capsules" . . . And don't forget: Your subscription to **PWI** includes the spectacular 100-page year-end issue, priced at $3.95 on the newsstand (if you can find it!) and every other special we produce throughout the year.

SAVE UP TO 25%!!
(Please check one)

- ☑ YES! I would like to subscribe to PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
- ☐ I am enclosing $33.85 for a 13-issue subscription—a 20% savings off the newsstand price!
- ☐ I am enclosing $63.50 for a 26-issue subscription—a full 25% savings off the newsstand rate!
- ☐ I wish to receive the *1997 PWI Wrestling Almanac* as a bonus to my subscription and have enclosed $2 to cover postage and handling
- ☐ I would like to order the *1997 PWI Almanac* only and have enclosed $7 as payment in full

Please indicate method of payment:

- ☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)
- ☐ VISA # _____
- ☐ MasterCard # _____
  Expiration Date: ___/___ MO/YR

Signature: _____

Send to: London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ APT. ____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Price offer good in U.S. only. Canada and all foreign countries: $45.10 for 13 issues ($67.20 airmail); $85.80 for 26 issues ($130.00 airmail). International money order in U.S. funds only for orders outside U.S. Please allow up to eight weeks before you receive your first issue..

4476/02-97

FEBRUARY 1998

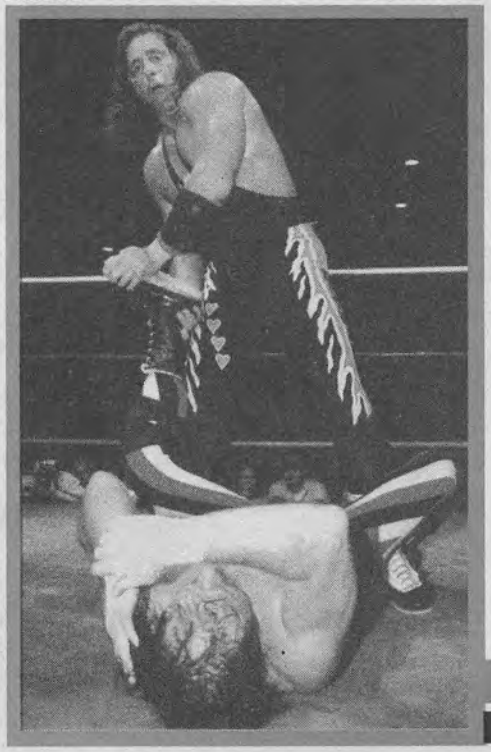
THE Wrestler

DEPARTMENTS

4 YOUR LETTERS
6 WHAT'S HAPPENING by Bill Apter
8 NO HOLDS BARRED with Steve Anderson
10 BLINDSIDED by Andy Rodriguez
12 THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN
14 CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS
16 YOU ASKED US
18 INTRODUCING ATLAS RIVERA
20 Q & A: HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN
24 X-RAY: KEN SHAMROCK
26 BEYOND THE SQUARED CIRCLE
28 SPOTLIGHT ON LEX LUGER
60 *THE WRESTLER* CLASSIC (February 1988)
64 OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS
66 RATINGS ANALYSIS

PAGE 34

PAGE 38



FEATURES

30 **TOO MUCH ON CHYNA'S PLATE? WHY HER MICHAELS-HELMSLEY PLAN IS DESTINED TO SHATTER**
Soon she could be left with no one to manage

34 **STING FEVER STRIKES! AND THE NWO CAN'T FIND THE CURE**
He doesn't talk or wrestle, but people love him!

38 **AMARILLO DOUBLE-CROSS: HOW BRET TOOK THE HEART OUT OF TERRY FUNK**
The "Hitman" ruined Funk's final match in his hometown

42 **NO USE BEATING A DEAD HORSEMAN: THE REAL REASON RIC FLAIR JETTISONED MONGO & BENOIT**
There was a lot more to it than what you saw on TV

46 **1 GANGSTA + 1 ELIMINATOR = 2 MUCH FOR THE DUDLEYS!**
It didn't take New Jack and Kronus long to gel as a team

Next issue on sale January 13, 1998

YOUR Letters

ANOTHER TRAGIC LOSS

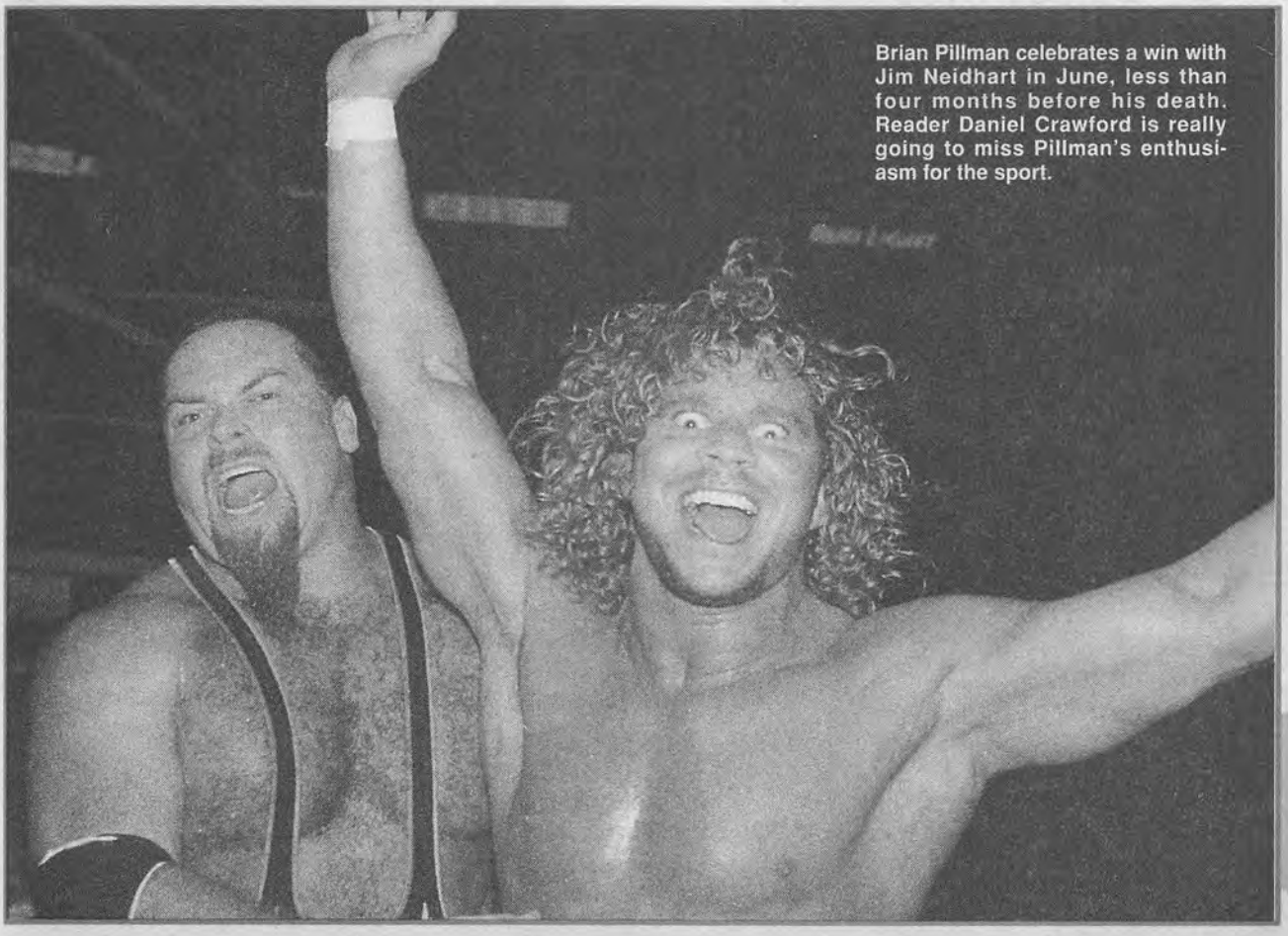
I am still stunned that Brian Pillman died. He was a nutcase, but he seemed to always enjoy being involved in wrestling. No matter what happened, he showed more enthusiasm than most other wrestlers today. He truly enjoyed being in the ring and seemed to pour his heart out with everything he did. Sure, sometimes it would have been better if he had kept some of his more ludicrous thoughts to himself, but at least he was trying. Many wrestlers today make it seem like they're doing us a favor by being in the ring or doing an interview. It was never like that with Pillman. He always showed so much passion every time he was in the spotlight that it was hard not to feel some sort of emotion when he was screaming at you as his whole head filled your TV screen.

I had thought the loss of other maniacs like Bruiser Brody and Eddie Gilbert was hard on the sport. Losing Pillman is just too much to bear.

DANIEL CRAWFORD
Nashville, TN

REVOLTING THOUGHT

I was shocked by Jose Jimenez' letter claiming that the formation of the New World Order was similar to the American Revolution ("Spirit of '97?" December 1997). It makes me ill to think someone could rationalize comparing this group of twisted individuals to the forefathers of our country. Hogan and company are trying to get rid of all wrestlers who are more talented than they are so they can be known as the world's best wrestlers. I rarely see an NWO member win a match based on talent. I'll admit they have brought some



Brian Pillman celebrates a win with Jim Neidhart in June, less than four months before his death. Reader Daniel Crawford is really going to miss Pillman's enthusiasm for the sport.

The Nation of Domination's Kama Mustafa, Rocky Maivia, and D-Lo Brown perform the group's signature one-arm salute. Reader David Miller is disturbed by the number of gangs he sees in wrestling today.

excitement to *WCW Monday Nitro*, but is it worth the price that has been paid by Ric Flair and Arn Anderson? The NWO has absolutely no respect for the sport or for the amazing abilities of their opponents.

In my opinion, the NWO is a serious threat to all wrestlers with true talent. The NWO is an example of what is wrong with this country and the world.

RUKI SLABAUGH
Burkburnett, TX

DISTURBING TREND

I am uncomfortable with the direction in which our sport is headed. Undoubtedly, the WWF-WCW Monday night wrestling war has resulted in a more exciting, competitive spirit, and there's also a new kid on the block, Extreme Championship Wrestling, challenging them both. There is, however, a very disturbing trend developing—one of gang violence. The recent trend started in WCW, but is now visible in the WWF and other organizations.

Trends have always been a part of wrestling. Fans booed the Russians from the 1950s until the fall of communism. During the Persian Gulf War, Americans rallied behind Hulk Hogan and Hacksaw Duggan as they waved the American flag. As rap evolved, wrestlers like PG-13 and Public Enemy emerged. They wore gold chains, baggy clothing, and had the rebellious attitudes that seemed to define the rap scene.

Now the only harm that could come from the rap trend was that maybe some parents were horrified to see their children dressed like J.C. Ice. However, the current trend of gang violence has the potential to affect everyone. Gang violence accounts for so many senseless deaths among teenagers each year. It is not uncommon for a typical gang to consist of teenagers and sometimes preteens (a target audience of wrestling promotions) whose violent actions stem from perceived wrongdoings and threat of turf invasion. They wear the same colors, spray-paint graffiti, and flash hand signals only they can understand. Sound familiar? If you didn't see it on a newscast, chances are you saw it on *Nitro* or *Raw*.

Whether wrestlers like it or not, they are role models whom children will look up to and try to emulate. When Hulk Hogan attacks J.J. Dillon and spray-paints him, the message being sent is that it's

(Continued on page 50)

The Wrestler

STANLEY WESTON
Founder

PUBLISHER ..... Stuart M. Saks
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ..... David Lenker
SENIOR EDITOR ..... Bill Apter
MANAGING EDITOR ..... Brandi Mankiewicz
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR ..... Wendy Vetter
ART ASSOCIATES ..... Joseph Kalman, Alex Krasnopolsky, Walt Schmidt, Lisa Witter
SENIOR WRITERS ..... David Rosenbaum, Andy Rodriguez, Bryan Ethier, Steve Anderson, Harry Burkett
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR ..... Ron Frankhouser
PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT ..... Cliff Campo, Kelly Flum
PHOTO EDITOR ..... Frank Vitucci
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS ..... Matt Brock, Elizabeth A. Hunter, Craig Peters

VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING
David Gerhardt

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT CIRCULATION
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Robert Nucci

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Sharon Liggio
(215) 643-6385

CUSTOMER SERVICES
P.O. Box 96, Dept. CS
Fort Washington, PA 19034

COVER DESIGN:
Lisa Witter

The Wrestler, Vol. 32, No. 2, (ISSN: 1052-0899) is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: The Wrestler, P.O. Box 910, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Single copy price $2.50 ($3.50 in Canada, £1.95 in U.K.). Subscription price $29.20 for 13 issues in the U.S., $39.60 in remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. **FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES:** (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable News Inc., 11 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. International distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.

WHAT'S Happening

By Bill Apter

THANKS TO INTERIM WCW Commissioner **Roddy Piper**, the NWO's plan to kidnap **Sting** the night of Starrcade was thwarted! I got this information from Piper himself just before this magazine went to press. Apparently it was just one more attempt by the group to prevent Sting from getting his match with **"Hollywood" Hulk Hogan** for the WCW World title. If not for Piper's intervention, it could have turned into one of wrestling's all-time greatest scandals.

"I got this information from a source I have in the NWO," Piper told me. "I ain't sayin' who the guy is, but he's top-shelf with them. First of all, I know that the NWO makes audiotapes of all their little meetings.

"That way, this guy told me, if guys are arguing about a point someone made in the past, they can go back to the tape and straighten the matter out. Anyway, my source sent me this tape with Bischoff and Hogan's voices all over it. Big-mouth Bischoff was assuring Hogan that Sting would be 'dealt with' before he got to the arena, and a substitute Sting—the NWO guy who wrestles in Japan and looks like the real thing—would be put in his place.

"He said the impostor would make it look like he's puttin' up a helluva fight, but then Hogan would make a comeback after about five minutes and legdrop him for the victory. Then Hogan asked Bischoff when the real Sting would be released and was told 'right after the match. If he shows up, he won't be able to prove he's the real one, and all the fans will have gone home anyway.'

"To make sure that this couldn't happen, I got in contact with Sting—don't ask me how—and assured him he will have a clear path to both the arena and the ring. I ain't lettin' the NWO ruin this party!"

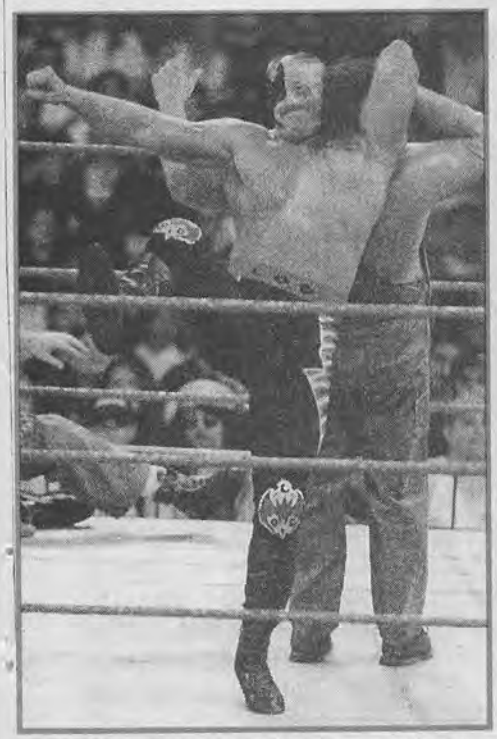
Now that **The Road Warriors** have won the WWF World tag team belts, **Bret Hart** has a stern message for them: "**Hawk** and **Animal** beat the **Godwinns** only because the interference of **Uncle Cletus** backfired and because they vowed to retire if they lost," Bret

Roddy Piper has become a very close ally of both Sting and "Diamond" Dallas Page as all of them battle the NWO. The "Rowdy Scot" recently did Sting a very big favor in regard to Starrcade.

said. "The Road Warriors had a little extra adrenaline that one night, so things worked out. But **The Hart Foundation** wants those belts now. We swore one of us would win the World title, and I did that. We swore that one of us would win the Intercontinental title, and **Owen** did that. Now we have me, Owen, **Davey Boy Smith**, and **Jim Neidhart**, and two of us—I don't know which two—will beat those guys. As you can know, I don't make empty promises."

Bam Bam Bigelow won the ECW heavyweight title from **Shane Douglas** on October 16. At the time, Bigelow, along with Douglas and **Chris Candido**, were part of ECW's **Triple Threat**. But Bigelow was persuaded to take the match by Douglas' aide, **Rick Rude**. "Shane kept telling me to get him top challengers to keep him at the top of his game," Rude said. "He was shocked when I brought Bam Bam, one of the toughest men in the world, to the ring, but it was the right thing to do."

The good relationship between Shane Douglas and Bam Bam Bigelow in ECW is over. Bam Bam beat "The Franchise" for the ECW heavyweight title after Rick Rude convinced him to take the match.



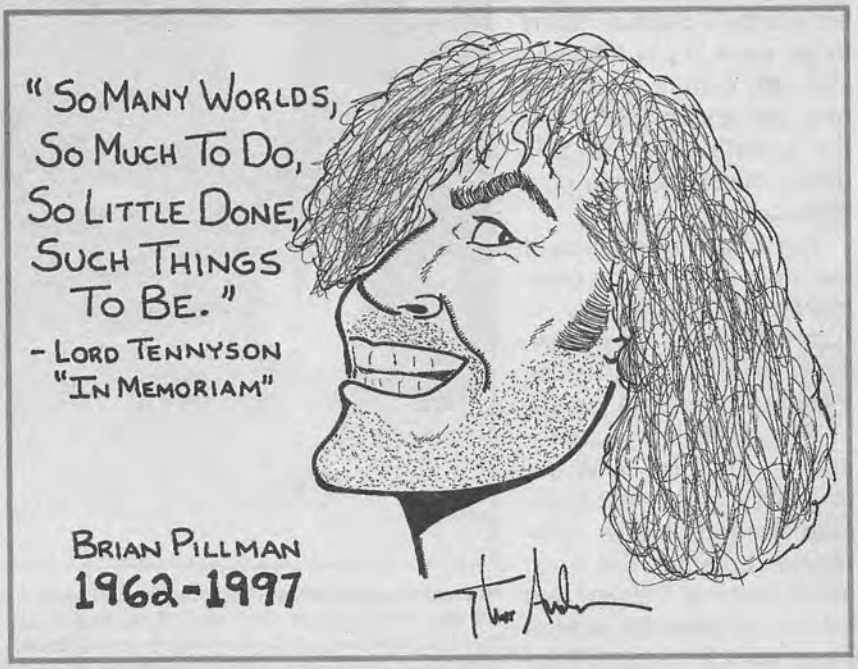
Road Warrior Hawk uses a neckbreaker on Henry Godwinn. The Legion of Doom will likely have to defend the WWF World tag team title against the Godwinns a few more times, but it had better be wary of The Hart Foundation, too.

Shane was shocked even further when Bigelow used the "Rude Awakening," Rude's old finisher, on him. The match lasted only a little more than five minutes and ended after Bigelow powerbombed Shane and pinned him.

Veteran **Chris Adams** has entered WCW and has looked good in his first few matches there. "I feel great, too," he noted. "I'm not looking for any titles right now. I'm just enjoying wrestling in

(Continued on page 52)

Steve Anderson's View



No Holds Barred

with Steve Anderson

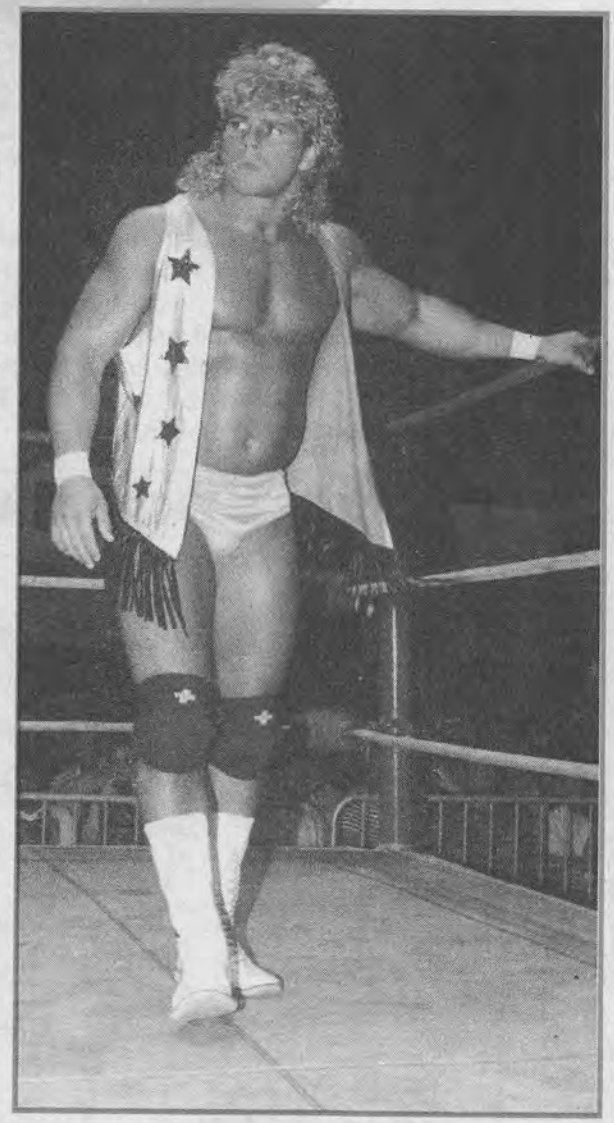
"He lived for this business. And you could say that he died for this business."
—Melanie Pillman, October 6, 1997, one day after her husband, Brian, died

OBSTACLES.

The news of Brian Pillman's death spread so fast, even before a grim-faced Vince McMahon announced it to the world prior to the October 5 WWF Badd Blood pay-per-view. Fans took to the Internet thirsting for information on his untimely demise. Many found ways to pay tribute to the star. Others wondered how the loss would affect the wrestling world. Still others questioned the possible causes.

But one key aspect of the story was quickly overlooked—at least initially. In fact, six things—six people. The members of Brian Pillman's immediate family.

The WWF lost a superstar on October 5. Wrestling lost a great mat technician. Friends lost a comrade and partner. But worst of all, Melanie Pillman and her five children lost a husband and a father. That more than anything is the true tragedy in the death of Brian Pillman.



Not many people knew it before Brian Pillman's death, but the man once known as "Flyin'" Brian had to overcome so many obstacles just to become a pro wrestler. Now his wife and children must struggle with life without him.

Less than 24 hours after Brian's body was discovered in a hotel room, a despondent Melanie took to the air on *Raw Is War* to talk about her husband's death. There she sat, the lines on her face deep from the grief that she had experienced during the past day and night.

She more than anyone knew the obstacles that Brian had faced throughout his 35-year life. Some details were known of Brian's difficult life, but, post-mortem, we learned a lot more about the obstacles he faced throughout his life.

Obstacle number one was basic survival. He was born with throat cancer and had to endure 36 operations before he was 16. Some gave him little chance to survive. But little did they know what that cancer was up against.

Brian spoke and Brian survived. While his voice was raspy, it was strong and reflected his incredible

(Continued on page 54)

COMBINE & SAVE

By taking advantage of our special combination offers, you can have all of the world's leading wrestling magazines delivered to your door and save up to 30% off the regular newsstand price!

COMBINE & SAVE

Magazines	ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION # of Issues	U.S. Price	Canada/ Foreign	TWO-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION # of Issues	U.S. Price	Canada/ Foreign
DISCOUNT COMBINATION OFFER *(SAVE 25%!)*						
☐ New ☐ Renewal — THE WRESTLER, INSIDE WRESTLING	26 (13 each title)	☐ $54.75	☐ $75.55 ($119.75 airmail)	52 (26 each title)	☐ $109.50	☐ $151.10 ($239.50 airmail)
SUPER SAVER COMBINATION OFFER *(SAVE 30%!)*						
☐ New ☐ Renewal — PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, THE WRESTLER, INSIDE WRESTLING	39 (13 each title)	☐ $81.50	☐ $112.70 ($199.00 airmail)	78 (26 each title)	☐ $162.95	☐ $225.35 ($357.95 airmail)

☑ **YES!** Please enter the combination subscription I have checked above. I have enclosed a check or money order for payment in full or included my credit card number to charge my purchase.

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to LONDON PUBLISHING CO.)

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard Expiration Date: ____/____ MO / YR

Card No.: _____

Signature: _____

Send To: LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

For orders outside the U.S., international money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow up to eight weeks before you receive your first issue.

4483/02-97

Blindsided:

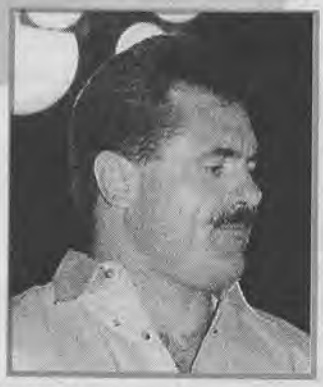
By Andy Rodriguez

RICK RUDE IS being asked a lot lately about his loyalties. He says it's very simple: He's loyal to whoever pays him. But one man who used to pay him is very upset with him, and another who still does might not be putting up with him much longer.

The first man in question is Shane Douglas. Douglas competes in ECW, where he formed, with Bam Bam Bigelow and Chris Candido, a group known as The Triple Threat. For months, Rude served as an adviser to the threesome. But for Douglas, Rude was a personal matchmaker, finding for Shane opponents whom Rude considered suitable competition.

The other is Shawn Michaels. In the WWF, Rude continues to aid Michaels as a member of The Kliq, which also has Hunter Hearst Helmsley and Chyna as members.

Until recently, neither Douglas nor Michaels had a problem with the arrangement. Though they've despised each other since the days when Shane competed in the WWF as Dean Douglas, both men appeared to trust Rude's discretion in keeping his ECW business separate from his WWF affairs.



Who can trust Rick Rude?

Then one night in Elmhurst, New York, Douglas came to the ring to defend his ECW heavyweight championship and encountered an unusual opponent: Bigelow, a foe picked—as usual—by Rude. For Bigelow, it was a great deal. He was getting tired of being overshadowed by Douglas. Rude gave him the opportunity, and he was grateful.

Douglas wasn't grateful. He was shocked. He was angry. And he lost decisively. He blamed the loss on Rude, so Rude and Bigelow went off and formed their own little alliance. We'll see how long that lasts.

"I can't believe Rude did that!" Douglas fumed after the bout. "The man can't be trusted. I mean, he was against me a while ago, but now I don't know what the hell he's thinking! Hey, I respect Bam Bam. He wouldn't have been asked to join The Triple Threat if he wasn't a helluva wrestler. But he's not supposed to be succeeding at my expense."

When I reached Douglas a few days later, he was still angry, but by then he thought he had a reason for Rude's actions.

"It's gotta be that whole thing he's got going with Michaels in the WWF," he said. "That has to have something to do with this. Maybe Shawn told Rick to make me look bad. I don't know what it is exactly, but I don't like this."

Rude says he understands Douglas' feelings, but doesn't think Shane knows what he's talking about.

"What Shane should have done was take the long view," Rude explained calmly. "Okay, he lost the belt and he's ticked off. Hell, I would be, too. But he has to put this in perspective. This whole experience is going to make him a better wrestler and a better man. Bam Bam deserves this, and if Shane Douglas is just gonna sit around making excuses for why he lost, then I'm glad I'm not around him anymore.

"But the suggestion that this has anything to do with Shawn Michaels is ridiculous. Yeah, I know what went down between Shane and Shawn in the past, but that's their business. It does not concern me."

Okay, but if Rude was that quick to betray Douglas—and I do consider what he did to Douglas a betrayal—what's going to stop him from doing the same to Michaels? What happens if Bret Hart offers Rude a few thousand dollars to wrap a steel chair around Michaels' head at the right moment? I say he takes the money and does the deed in a heartbeat.

I tried to get Shawn's take on the situation, but he has become so arrogant that he rarely finds time for extended interviews with reporters these days. Try asking him about something that's going on in ECW and you're really testing his patience, but I know how smart Shawn is. I'm certain he knows exactly what's going on with Rude in ECW. And I also have observed this of late: Shawn seems a lot closer to Helmsley and Chyna than he does to Rude.

It's hard to imagine Shawn Michaels and Shane Douglas ever agreeing on anything of significance, but Michaels would be smart if he realized that Shane is exactly right when he says Rick Rude cannot be trusted. □

R F Video Presents...

Bloodbaths, Brawls and Women

Here they are...The best and the bloodiest bouts from the legendary ECW. Now all the table-smashing, skull-splitting mayhem of the world's most extreme wrestling league is yours to own and watch whenever you want. Over 10,000 saavy fans receive the RF Video Update each month, and these are the top-rated tapes. Check 'em out during this special introductory offer, and find out what makes 'em so hot.

ECW TV 16 Sandman vs. Cactus Jack (3 matches), Raven vs. Dreamer, Melanie vs. Guerrero, Benoit and Melanie vs. Mikey and Norman Smiley, Raven and Richards vs. Dreamer and Mikey.

ECW TV 17 Sandman vs. Cactus (Barbed Wire Match), Sandman vs. Shane Douglas, Beulah vs. Luna Vachon, Public Enemy vs. Pitbulls, and the ECW debut of the Gangstas.

ECW TV 18 Raven and Richards beating Public Enemy for the Tag Titles, Taz vs. 2 Cold Scorpio, Taz and Eddy Guerrero vs. Melanie and Scorpio (twice), Cactus and Dreamer and Pitbulls vs. Raven and Richards and Dudleys. Cactus and Melanie and Scorpio vs. Steiner and Guerrero, Public Enemy vs. Gangstas.

ECW TV 20 Melanie vs. Guerrero (Final ECW Match), Francine vs. Beulah (Cat Fight), Raven and Richards vs. Pitbulls, Steiners vs. Scorpio and Benoit, Raven and Richards vs. Pitbulls (Double Dog Collar Match).

ECW TV 21 Steiner and Taz vs. Eliminators and Scorpio, Steve Austin imitating Hulk Hogan, Rey Misterio Jr. Vs. Psicosis (twice), Public Enemy and Mikey vs. Sandman and Scorpio and New Jack (Cage Match).

ECW TV 22 Public Enemy vs. Gangstas, Taz and Rick Steiners vs. Eliminators. Cactus vs. Dreamer, Misterio Jr. and Konnan vs. LaParka and Psicosis, Sandman vs. Mikey.

ECW TV 23 Cactus and Raven vs. Dreamer and Funk, Heavenly Bodies debut in ECW, Konnan vs. Jason, Mikey vs. Misterio Jr., Steve Austin vs. Mikey (twice), Sabu return to ECW.

ECW TV 24 Steve Austin and Mikey and Sandman (3 way dance), Misterio Jr. Vs. Psicosis (Mexican Death Match), Raven vs. Dreamer, Public Enemy vs. Heavenly Bodies, Shane Douglas returns to ECW.

ECW TV 25 Eliminators vs. 911 and Rey Misterio Jr., Konnan vs. Sandman (Bloodbath), Sabu vs. Steve Richards, Rob Van Dam vs. Axl Rotten, Scorpio vs. Mikey, Sabu vs. Van Dam, Misterio Jr. vs. Juventud Guerrera, Headhunters return, Sandman vs. Raven.

ECW TV 26 Raven and Richards vs. Dreamer and Douglas, Brian Pillman debuts in ECW. Headhunters vs. Bruise Brothers, Raven vs. Douglas (Pillman runs in). Sabu vs. Scorpio, Eliminators and Richards vs. Pitbulls and Francine (Triple Dog Collar Match).

ECW TV 27 Headhunters vs. Gangstas, Cactus vs. Chris Jericho, Misterio Jr. vs. Guerrera (2 matches), Cactus vs. Mikey (Cactus' last ECW match). Gangstas - Eliminators Brawl)

ECW TV 28 Raven and Bruise Brothers vs. Dreamer, Douglas and Sandman. Sabu vs. Mikey, Taz vs. Jericho, Pitbulls and Dreamer vs. Bruises and lee, Dreamer vs. Lee, Raven vs. Douglas.

ECW TV 29 Sabu vs VanDam, Douglas vs. Scorpio, Taz vs. Scorpio, Jericho vs. Mikey, Jericho vs. Scorpio, Eliminators and Lee vs. Dreamer and Gangstas.

ECW TV 30 Brian Lee and Bruise Brothers vs. Dreamer and Pitbulls, Raven vs. Pitbull 2, VanDam vs. Mikey, Douglas vs. Pitbull 2, Sandman vs Richards.

ECW TV 31 Jericho vs. Pitbull #2, Dreamer vs. Lee (Weapons Match), Gangstas vs. Eliminators, Sabu vs. VanDam, Eliminators vs. Sabu and Mikey, Jerico vs. Douglas vs. Pitbull #2 vs. Scorpio (4 Way Dance).

ECW TV 32 Sabu vs. Louie Spicolli, Sandman vs. Richards, Eliminators vs. Okano and Yamada, Dreamer vs. Raven from Japan, Shane Douglas vs. Pitbull #2, and a 4-way dance for the Tag Titles.

ECW TV 33 Doug urnas vs. VanDam, Taz vs. Dreamer, Lee vs. Terry Gordy (Bad Street Match), Dudley vs. Axl and D-von Dudley.

ECW TV 34 Sabu and VanDam vs. Furnas and Kroffat (30 minute draw) Taz vs. Johnny Smith, Eliminators and Lee vs. Dreamer and Gordy and Steve Williams, Douglas vs. Pitbull #2, Lee and Richards vs. Dreamer and Sandman (Ultimate Jeopardy).

ECW TV 35 Jericho vs. Scorpio, Eliminators vs. Gangstas, Taz vs. Guido (Shoot Fight), Sandman vs. Scorpio, Douglas vs. Dreamer, Sabu and VanDam vs. Kroffat and Furnas.

ECW TV 36 ECW Royal Rumble, Douglas and Francine vs. Dreamer and Beulah, Taz vs. VanDam, Raven vs. Mikey, Raven v. Sandman, Candito vs. VanDam.

ECW TV 37 Gangstas vs. Morton and Rich, Raven vs. Sandman (Texas Death Match), Raven vs. Sandman (Hair vs. Belt), Raven vs. Steve Williams, Funk vs. Brian Lee.

ECW TV 38 Funk vs. Tommy Rich, Sabu and VanDam vs. Eliminators (Tables and Ladders), Dudleys vs. Gangstas, Funk and Dreamer vs Lee and Raven, Lance Storm vs. Balls Mahoney.

ECW TV 39 Taz vs. VanDam, Funk vs. Brian Lee, Balls vs. Sandman (Twice), Funk vs. Axl Rotten, Sabu vs. Spike Dudley, Raven and Shane vs. Dreamer and Funk, Great Sasuke and Hamada and nanina vs Taka and Men's Tech and Dick Togo (Michinoku Pro G-Man).

ECW TV 40 Preview of "Barely Legal", Eliminators vs. Dudleys vs. Gangstas (3 Way Dance), Video clips of "Barely Legal", Rob Van Dam vs. Pitbull #2, and the Evolution of Mr. Monday Night.

ECW TV 41 Gangstas vs. Dudleys vs. Eliminators (3 Way Dance), Bam Bam Bigelows return to ECW, Rude's debut as TV commentator, Sabu and Van Dam vs. Taz and Candito, Dreamer vs. Spicolli, Sandman vs. Balls, Raven and Richards vs. Funk and Dreamer.

Send Me:

☐ ECW 16	☐ ECW 25	☐ ECW 34
☐ ECW 17	☐ ECW 26	☐ ECW 35
☐ ECW 18	☐ ECW 27	☐ ECW 36
☐ ECW 19	☐ ECW 28	☐ ECW 37
☐ ECW 20	☐ ECW 29	☐ ECW 38
☐ ECW 21	☐ ECW 30	☐ ECW 39
☐ ECW 22	☐ ECW 31	☐ ECW 40
☐ ECW 23	☐ ECW 32	☐ ECW 41
☐ ECW 24	☐ ECW 33	

Name

Address

City State Zip

Tape prices

1 for $20, 2 for $35, 3 for $50, 4 for $65, 5 for $80, 6 for $95, 7 for $110, 8 for $125, 9 for $140, 10 for $155.

BONUS - Buy more than 10 tapes at once from this ad - all tapes after 10 will be $10 each.

☐ Enclosed is my check or money order

Charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Expiration Date _____/_____

Credit Card Number

Signature

ORDER BY PHONE

215-949-9502

Lines open 24 hours a day. VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover only.

FREE BONUS BEULAH PIC!

She's hot.. And she's yours with any order of 4 tapes or more.

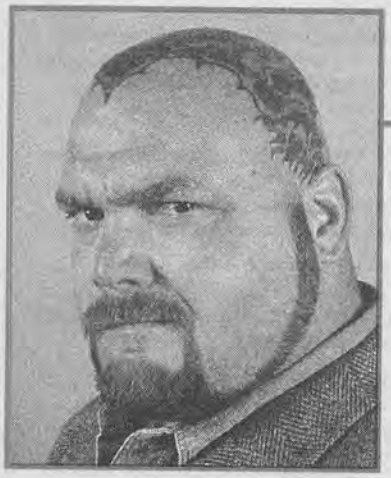
☐ Put me on your mailing list.

I'm not ready to order now, but put me on the list to receive a **FREE** RF Video Update every month.

Mail Order Form To: RF Video PO Box 797 Langhorne, PA 19047 Website: wrestlingnews.com/rfvideo

97-54

THUMBS UP



Thumbs Up to Bam Bam Bigelow. The "Beast From The East" is back! Did you notice how impressive his victory over Shane Douglas for the ECW heavyweight title was? It was a pretty nice accomplishment by a guy who had been spending so much of his time beating up and bloodying Spike Dudley. Bigelow got his chance when Rick Rude, Douglas' adviser, made the mistake of lining up Bam Bam for a match against the champion. Douglas, who didn't know who he would be wrestling that night, was shocked to see Bigelow, who proceeded to beat him in almost no time at all. Against a man as skilled as Douglas, that's not easy to do.

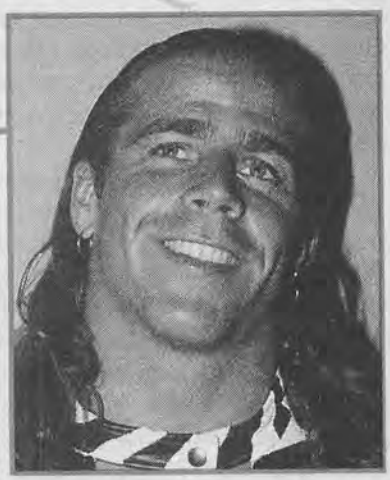
Thumbs Up to Rey Misterio Jr. In one of the greatest matches we've seen this decade, the sensational masked man won the WCW cruiserweight title from Eddy Guerrero at Halloween Havoc. If you've already seen the match, watch it again. If you haven't seen it, get a friend who tapes the pay-per-view to loan you the tape. There were tons of high-risk aerial maneuvers that could have turned the match at any moment ... and changed Misterio's life. If he had lost, he would have had to remove his mask. Well, we already know what Misterio is, if not who he is: a great wrestler and a champion.

Thumbs Up to Roddy Piper. He isn't much of an interim commissioner. In fact, Piper should never have been appointed to the position. But this veteran is still a very effective wrestler when he wants to be, as he proved by giving World champion Hulk Hogan another rough match in the steel cage main event at Halloween Havoc. Too bad Hogan's title wasn't on the line. Piper showed a lot of determination and out-toughed "Hollywood." If there's one thing we've learned about the "Rowdy Scot," it's that he's a heckuva lot tougher than he looks. Hogan knows it. He learned his lesson again at Havoc.

Thumbs Up to Dallas Page. DDP is sharp as ever, even if he doesn't get the breaks and constantly is on the wrong end of interference by the NWO. It happened at Halloween Havoc, when Page dominated Randy Savage, but still lost when he was attacked by an impostor Sting. The next night, Hulk Hogan issued an open challenge, and although Page was injured and had his ribs wrapped up, he answered it ... and nearly won. In fact, he might have won if another fake Sting hadn't come out and attacked him again. Page used his "Diamond cutter" on the impostor, but by that time, Hogan was already beating him with his belt and getting himself disqualified.

THUMBS Down

Thumbs Down to Jeff Jarrett. The man formerly known as "Double-J" is back in the WWF. *Hmmmmmm* ... we're not sure they missed him. Jarrett returned a week after his WCW contract ran out and immediately made his presence known with some very candid comments. First he ranked on Eric Bischoff. Why was Jarrett talking about things that happened in WCW when he was in the WWF? Then he blamed Vince McMahon for holding him back in the WWF a few years earlier. Basically, Jarrett was shooting off his mouth about things he shouldn't have been talking about in public. Keep a lid on it, Jeff.



Thumbs Down to Shawn Michaels. They're lewd, they're disgusting, and they're rude. They're Degeneration X, of course, and they're the worst thing to happen to the WWF in a long time. They keep doing disgusting things while the WWF cameras are rolling (we won't even stoop so low as to say exactly what they're doing), and we're not sure why. They also incited a feud between The Hart Foundation and Nation of Domination. And the leader of this icky group is Shawn Michaels, "The Heartbreak Kid" himself. Michaels shouldn't be inciting battles. He should be fighting his own. He has plenty of those.

Thumbs Down to Debra McMichael. Let this serve as a warning to any man who has any idea of getting together with Debra McMichael, now that she has split up with hubby Steve McMichael: Don't do it! She's a vengeful ... witch! Debra promised to have a mystery man fight her battle against Steve at Halloween Havoc, and she brought out Alex Wright. But during the match, Bill Goldberg, a WCW newcomer, came out and beat the heck out of McMichael, enabling Wright to score the pin. So here's what Debra had done: She paid off two guys to humiliate "Mongo." And then she gave Goldberg Steve's Super Bowl ring. For shame!

Thumbs Down to Devon Storm. And the same goes for Ace Darling, Storm's best friend and the reigning ECWA TV champ. ECWA fans were shocked when Darling recently offered to give one of his arch-rivals, Cheetah Master, a title shot. They were shocked because Cheetah had been fired by rulebreaking manager The Master, who had assumed control of the promotion earlier in the year. When Cheetah came out, it quickly became evident that it wasn't really Cheetah, but rather Storm dressed as him. Storm let Darling get an easy pin on him. But the scheme backfired as the real Cheetah eventually arrived and pinned Darling in a non-title match.

CORRESPONDENTS Reports

Tampa, FL ***(Correspondent—Jim Finch):*** Rick and Scott Steiner have Larry Zbyszko and Roddy Piper to thank for their fifth WCW World tag team title victory, as both played a part in securing their victory over Scott Hall and Syxx. Syxx defended the title on behalf of Hall's regular partner, Kevin Nash, who was recovering from knee surgery.

The Steiners were clearly ready for this bout, as they dominated from the beginning, manhandling both Syxx and Hall with clotheslines and other moves. In the midst of the action, Larry Zbyszko came out and started taunting Hall. Hall went after him, leaving Syxx alone to fight two Steiners in the ring.

Larry Zbyszko makes the three-count as Rick Steiner pins Scott Hall to win the WCW World tag team title for him and his brother. Zbyszko got involved after Hall roughed up the original referee.

As Syxx was about to be pinned, Hall pulled referee Charles Robinson out of the ring, breaking the three-count. As Robinson lay dazed outside the ring, Scott caught Syxx with a top-rope DDT and covered him. At about the same time, Rick caught Hall with a top-rope bulldog and covered him. When Zbyszko saw the referee was injured, he slid into the ring and counted the pin on Hall. Interim Commissioner Roddy Piper later announced that the Steiners' victory was valid since Zbyszko had been certified as a referee a week earlier.

In other bouts: WCW cruiserweight champion Eddy Guerrero pinned Psicosis ... Steve McMichael beat Steven Regal ... Yuji Nagata beat Chris Jericho ... Bill Goldberg pinned Scotty Riggs ... Dean Malenko beat Rey Misterio Jr. by submission after Eddy Guerrero interfered ... Scott Norton pinned Ray Traylor ... WCW TV champ Disco Inferno pinned Alex Wright ... WCW U.S. champ Curt Hennig beat Dallas Page by disqualification.

St. Louis, MO ***(Correspondent—Tom Birchland):*** Shawn Michaels took tremendous punishment from The Undertaker throughout their "Hell In A Cell" cage match at In Your House at the Kiel Center, but he got the pinfall victory after receiving help from an unlikely source: The Undertaker's alleged brother, Kane.

The Undertaker was all over Shawn from the start, battering him with a series of hard forearms and kicks. One forearm blow sent Shawn over the top rope to the floor. 'Taker then whipped Shawn into the cage and clotheslined him as he bounced off. When Michaels managed to block 'Taker's try for a power bomb, he got rammed into the cage for his efforts.

Later, Michaels escaped the onslaught by getting into the ring. From there, he dove through the ropes onto Undertaker at ringside. Then Michaels scaled the cage and hit 'Taker with an elbowdrop. He followed up that move by throwing the ring stairs at him and repeatedly bashing him with a chair.

A few minutes later, the action returned to the ring, and Michaels once again gained the upper hand. But as Shawn ran toward him, 'Taker backdropped him out

(Continued on page 56)

NOW AVAILABLE BY E-MAIL!

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY

PACKED WITH INFORMATION!

All the information you want is right here—each and every week! All the latest news and gossip! Comprehensive results from around the world! A calendar of upcoming events! Complete ratings! And feature stories that keep you on top of today's news *today*—with the authority and reliability only the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* team of reporters can provide!

GET IT INSTANTANEOUSLY–VIA E-MAIL!

For those fans who can't get their news fast enough, *PWI Weekly* is now available via e-mail. No longer will you have to wait for your postal delivery. *PWI Weekly* is produced every Monday and sent to e-mail subscribers that very evening! You'll receive electronic text files only, but you'll get them fast—and at no extra cost!

STILL NOT SURE?

Want to try a sample issue of *PWI Weekly*? No problem! Just send us $1.95 and we'll send you a sample copy hot off the press! But be warned: Once you see all the news, results, and information packed into our newsletter, you'll be hooked! (Sorry, no credit cards accepted for single-issue orders.)

WOW! SAVE UP TO 50%!

PUBLISHER'S WARNING: Subscribing To *PWI Weekly* Now Greatly Increases Your Wrestling Knowledge.

Send to:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Fort Washington, PA 19034

☐ NEW ☐ RENEWAL

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)
☐ VISA
☐ MasterCard
Card number: _____
Expiration date: ____/____
MO/YR

Signature_____

YES! I want to be the first with all the news! Please send me a subscription to *PWI Weekly* as follows:

☐ 17 issues for just $19.99, a 40% savings
☐ 34 issues for just $34.99, a 45% savings
☐ 52 issues for just $49.99, a 50% savings
☐ I'd like to see a sample copy before I subscribe. Enclosed please find a check or money order for $1.95
☐ Please send my subscription electronically via e-mail only at no additional cost (specify e-mail address and postal address)

E-MAIL ADDRESS_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____**APT**____

CITY_____**STATE**____**ZIP**_____

Offer good in U.S. and Canada only. Foreign airmail orders: $2.65 for single issue; $32.74 for 17 issues; $60.49 for 34 issues; $88.99 for 52 issues. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow eight weeks for subscription to start.

4501/03-97

YOU Asked Us...

Asked whether wrestling is better now than it was a decade ago, Jim Cornette said it is simply different. He isn't sure that he likes the fact that there are so many gangs, however.

Q: "My question is for the greatest manager in wrestling history, James E. Cornette. Mr. Cornette, I have always admired your outspoken and candid approach to the sport. Tell me, in your honest opinion, is the quality of pro wrestling better or worse now than it was 10 years ago?" — Kelly Stewart, Bridgewater, MA

A: "Sometimes it seems hard to believe the wrestling of then and the wrestling of now is the same at all," Cornette responded. "Ten years ago, my Midnight Express, Dennis Condrey and 'Beautiful' Bobby Eaton, revolutionized tag team wrestling with crisp tags, high-impact teamwork, and smart wrestling. Today, guys with rattan canes and outright thugs like the Disciples of Apocalypse, Los Boricuas, and Nation of Domination are on top, while some of the more talented guys are having trouble getting the matches I think they deserve. I'd like to see guys taking each other on one-on-one more the way they did in the old days, but you do have a lot of great wrestlers out there. Is wrestling better or worse? Neither. It's just a different mentality."

• • •

Q: "Here's a question for Rocky Maivia: I know you felt all the fans betrayed you while you were trying to wrestle by the rules, but do you still feel joining the Nation of Domination has paid off for you? You could have turned rulebreaker and gone out on your own, right?" —Jim Carney, Pittsburgh, PA

A: "Joining the Nation has paid off, but in a way you probably wouldn't understand," Maivia said. "When I was slapping hands with the fans, I heard a lot of you chanting 'Die, Rocky, die,' and I had no one watching my back. That's why I lost my Intercontinental belt to Owen Hart, of all people. Today, I have Faarooq, Kama Mustafa, and D-Lo with me all the time. You don't see people jumping my back today, do you? If I was on my own, the promoters would be ignoring me, but since I have the Nation supporting me, they can't ignore all of us. It's all about getting the respect I deserve. I haven't regretted joining for a second."

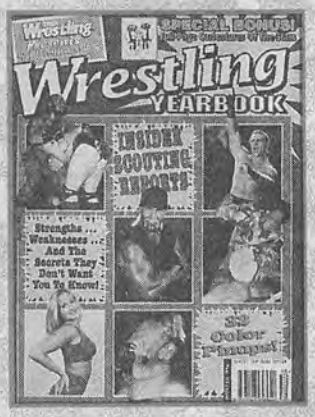
(Continued on page 57)

Rocky Maivia hasn't had much success against his old friend Ahmed Johnson since joining the Nation of Domination, but he still believes the group is helping him as a wrestler.

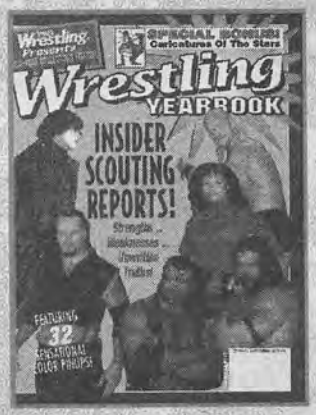
WRESTLING COLLECTORS!

Do you know what you're missing?

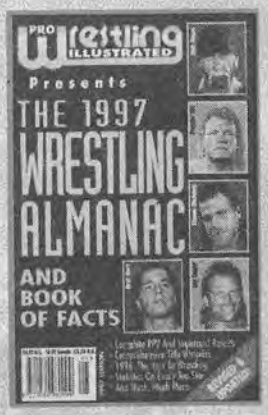
We have limited remaining supplies on five of the most popular issues London Publishing has ever produced! Order now—before they're all gone!



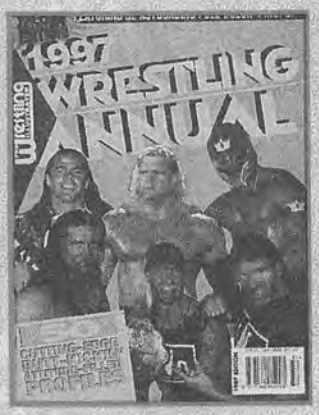
1996 WRESTLING YEARBOOK
Exclusive scouting reports on 30 of wrestling's best. PLUS—30 hilarious full-page caricatures by *PWI's* Jason Conlan! 100 pages! 32 color pinups!



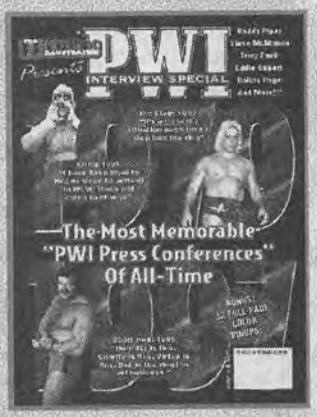
1997 WRESTLING YEARBOOK
We turn loose caricaturist Jason Conlan one more time (whether his subjects like it or not!). 30 scouting reports. 32 color pinups!



1997 ALMANAC
The authoritative wrestling reference tool. Full pay-per-view and supercard results. Title histories. Every "*PWI* 500." 1996 Stats. Digest-sized. 196 pages!



1997 WRESTLING ANNUAL
Butt-kickin', attitude-filled "pro-files," plus a look at what we felt was ahead in 1997 for wrestling's top stars. What's in, what's out. 100 pages! 32 color pinups!



PWI INTERVIEW SPECIAL
One select "Press Conference" since 1979, *PWI's* first year. Scott Hall, Bruno Sammartino, Dallas Page, Kevin Von Erich, Ric Flair, and more! 32 color pinup!

☐ **1996 Wrestling Yearbook**

☐ **1997 Wrestling Yearbook**

☐ **1997 Wrestling Almanac**

☐ **1997 Wrestling Annual**

☐ **PWI Interview Special**

Please send the collector's issues I have indicated! I have enclosed $7 per issue as payment in full (postage included) or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum please). Send to:

London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State____ Zip_____

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA #_____

☐ MasterCard #_____

Expiration Date:___/___
MO YR

Signature:_____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be sent surface mail, and $3 for every issue to be sent airmail. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

4585/10-97

Introducing

By Craig Peters

ATLAS RIVERA

BREAKING INTO PRO wrestling is not easy. Not by any stretch of the imagination. You need an awful lot of tools:

Desire. You have to want it. Real bad. Because there are a lot of others out there who want it, too. Real bad. And if you don't want it more than they want it, you might as well practice saying, "You want fries with that?"

Strength. Of character, of course, but we're also talking raw muscle here. You need the power to outlast the others. And if you have agility *and* size, that makes it all the better.

Money. Crass as it may seem ... yeah, you need some money. To pay for gym time. Trainers. Lockers. Food. Money to live on while you pursue your dream.

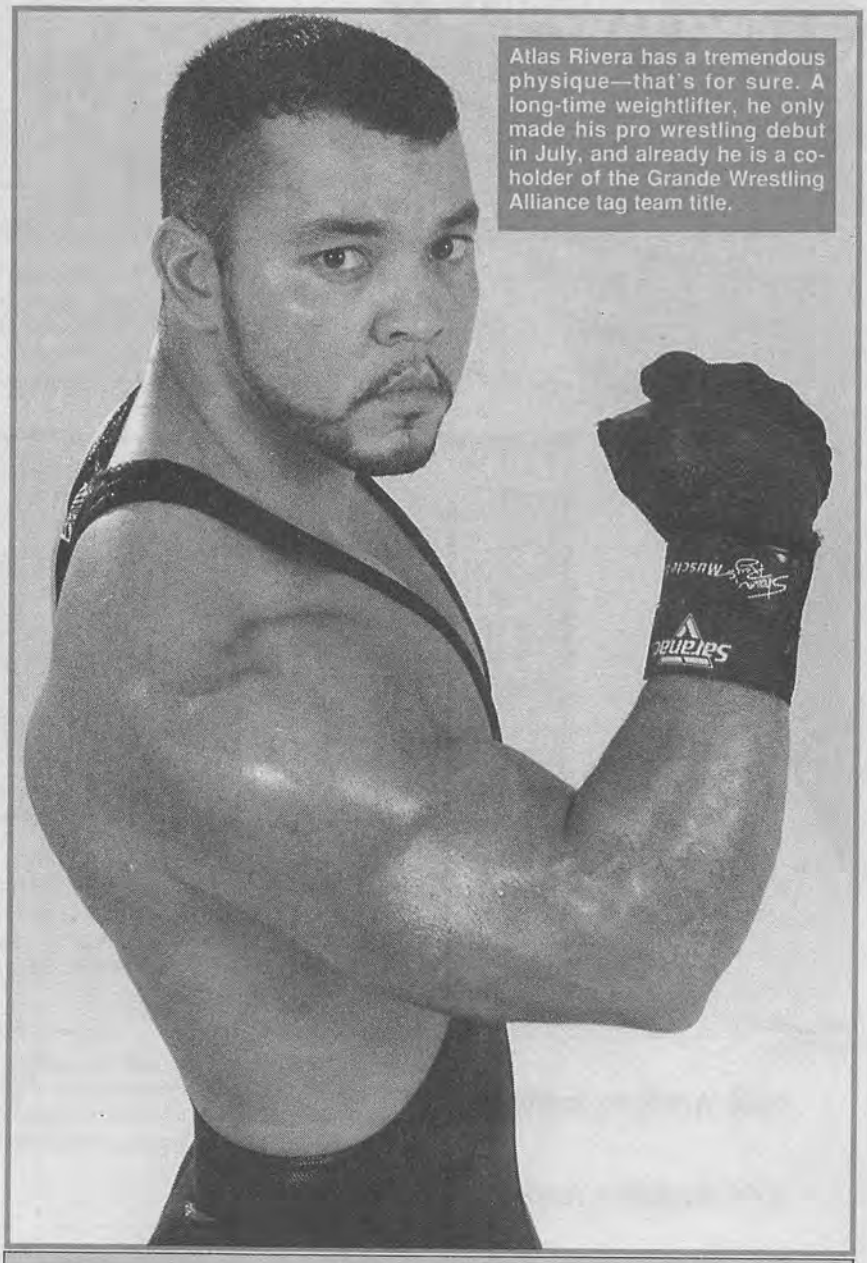
Atlas Rivera's dream wasn't grounded in pro wrestling. Not at first, anyway. Weightlifting is his strength, no pun intended, and he is darn good at it.

Which is why he's in pro wrestling today.

Sure, we'll explain.

Rivera is about as strong as they come, so strong that he won a bench-press competition last year at the venerable Power Pit Gym in Philadelphia—a city not known for breeding wimps.

Rivera didn't know it, but among the throng of admiring eyes that early-1997 day he was pumping championship iron were two pairs of retinas focused closely on his efforts. They belonged to Cyclone and Nitro—a tag team known as The Puerto Rican Swat Team—who just so happened to



Atlas Rivera has a tremendous physique—that's for sure. A long-time weightlifter, he only made his pro wrestling debut in July, and already he is a co-holder of the Grande Wrestling Alliance tag team title.

Atlas Rivera may only be in his rookie year as a pro, but he's already showing signs of becoming one of the greatest Puerto Rican wrestlers ever!

Rivera kicks Mayhem of The West Side Bad Boys, who are part of a bigger group called The Cash Money Boys. He's feuding with that entire organization even though one member is his regular tag team partner.

be in the market for an enforcer.

And they were impressed.

Big-time.

"I took one look at Rivera and I knew this was just the man we were looking for," Nitro told THE WRESTLER. "Awesome—he was simply awesome."

So awesome that Nitro and Cyclone decided to take Rivera to their trainer, Harley Hawkins, to see whether Rivera's pro wrestling potential was as awesome as they suspected it was.

It was.

"Every trainer looks for raw materials," Hawkins said of the 5'8", 225-pound San Juan, Puerto Rico, native, "and in Atlas, I found an abundance of those."

Hawkins put Rivera through his paces, and before long the bench-pressing strongman was ready to make his pro debut.

"What an amazing night," Rivera said "one of the greatest nights of my life ... and one of the worst."

It was the night of July 22, 1997, at the Felton Arena in Philadelphia when Rivera stepped into the Grande Wrestling Alliance ring for the first time as a pro. Across the canvas stood O-Dogg, a member of The Cash Money Boys along with Flex Wheeler and The West Side Bad Boys.

Rivera showed that he had paid attention to his training. His mat wrestling was solid, his aerial skills were raw but significant, and his power moves (of course!) were terrific. He also displayed what have become his two favorite maneuvers: the T-bone suplex (which he calls the "Atlasplex") and a version of the Samoan drop called the Boricua bomb.

But despite the heart and the soul and the strength and the sweat, Rivera lost that first match ... when Wheeler interfered.

"That is something I will never forgive him for, and something that I will never forget," Rivera said. "That night meant more to me than anything, and Wheeler messed it up. If it takes my entire career, I will make him pay for that 100 times over."

While Rivera travels the road to revenge, he is amassing quite a following ... particularly women, who bring him roses and present him with offers to be a dancer at their private parties. Rivera takes all the adoration in stride.

"My heroes in this sport were stars like Superstar Graham, The Road Warriors," he says. "You know, men who didn't really worry too much about the fans, who simply got into the ring to do a job, and did it in the best way they knew how. That's the kind of wrestler I want to be."

That job includes not only gaining revenge on Wheeler, but avenging his friend, Cyclone, whose career ended at the hands of The West Side Bad Boys (they broke Cyclone's vertebra with a DDT).

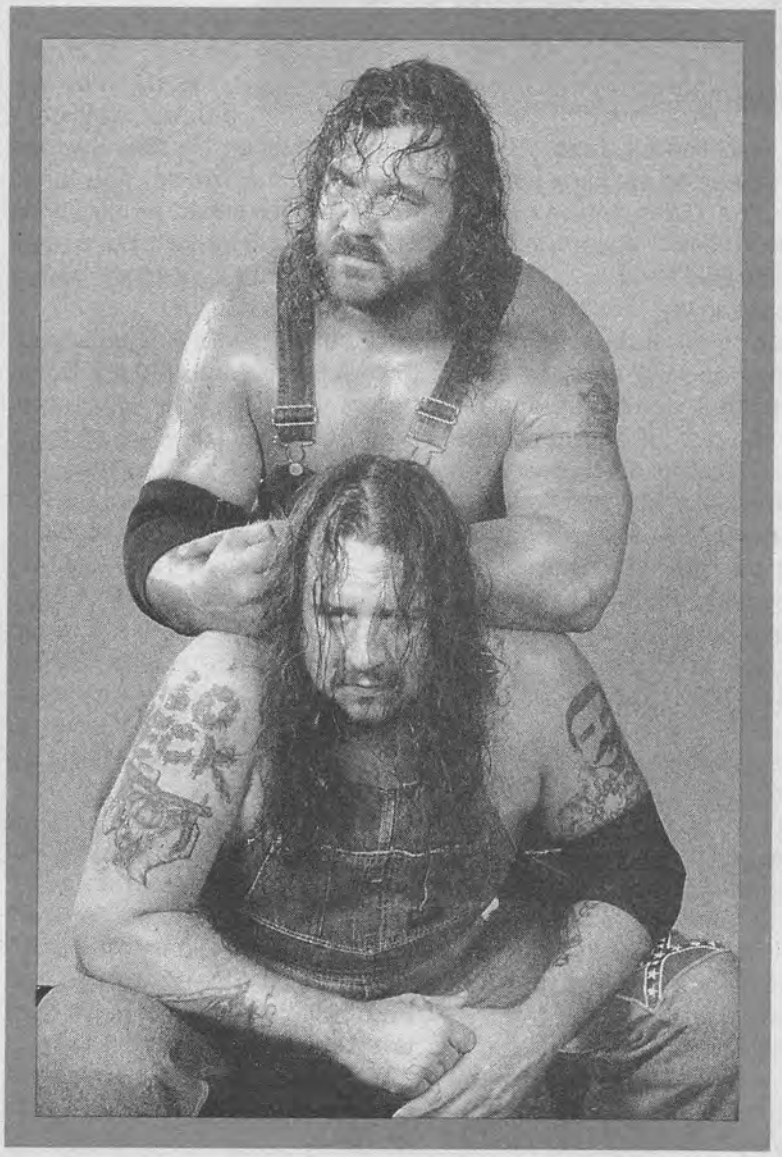
But at the same time he's feuding with The Cash Money Boys, he's teaming regularly with one of them, O-Dogg. The two of them earned a shot at the GWA tag team title by being the last two men standing at the end of a battle royal this summer. They went on to defeat The West Side Bad Boys for the belts on October 3 when Rivera pinned Havoc after O-Dogg refused to cover his friend. Though he despises O-Dogg, Rivera intends to keep teaming with him.

"I may have only been a pro for a few months, but I have an awful lot of business to take care of," Rivera said. "And I promise, I will not rest until I take care of all of it."

The West Side Bad Boys and Flex Wheeler would do well not to take those words lightly. Rivera is a man who can certainly has the desire and the strength to get the job done. □

Q & A

HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN



IN WRESTLING, SUCCESS comes in many forms. There are maniacs and control freaks. There are sinners and saints. And there are the Godwinns, the hog farmers from Biggers, Arkansas.

To see Henry and Phineas for the first time is to see a pair of buffoons. They hardly look like they know their way around the ring. But once the bell rings, they become one of the most dangerous tag teams in the WWF. Both men are master brawlers, and since they've become rulebreakers, Henry and Phineas are even more dastardly.

At the moment, the Godwinns are turning their wrath mainly toward The Road Warriors. The teams have feuded mightily for months. Henry and Phineas have held the WWF World tag team belts twice in their careers, but their reigns lasted a combined nine days, and the second one was ended by Hawk and Animal on October 7.

Until recently, the Godwinns had been accompanied to the ring by Uncle Cletus, but they dumped him after his interference backfired and caused them to lose the belts to The Road Warriors. They're convinced they can get back to the top without him.

Senior Writer Andy Rodriguez interviewed the Godwinns one afternoon before their match against The Road Warriors in Anaheim, California. They were eager for the bout with the Warriors, but anxious to make their views known about a lot of other things as well.

Phineas Godwinn pulls Road Warrior Animal back into the ring by his hair. He was reluctant to make the switch to rulebreaker earlier this year, but now he seems glad that Henry convinced him to do it.

Q: You guys really do hate The Road Warriors, don't you?

HENRY: You better believe we do! Think they're so tough! Why, I've got a good mind to ... to ...

PHINEAS: Rip the paint right off their faces!

HENRY: Yeah, rip the ... wait, what're you talkin' about, Phineas? You can't rip the paint off their faces! You could scrape it off, but then you need the right scrapin' tools. Use your head, boy!

PHINEAS: Yeah, you're right about that, Henry. Course you could rub it off, too.

HENRY: Yeah, that's true. Or maybe ...

Q: Whoa, guys, I think that's enough about face paint. How do you feel about The Road Warriors when you're actually wrestling them?

PHINEAS: How do you think we feel, you idiot! Long as I been in this sport I can't think of two men I hate more! People keep talkin' about the mighty Road Warriors, the great Road Warriors. Well, maybe they *were* pretty good—a long time ago! Today it's different! Today you got me and Henry in the WWF! The Legion of Doom ain't never seen anything like us. They never know when we're gonna jump 'em. I thought them guys were supposed to be so fearless. They're afraid of us.

Q: Then how did you lose the belts to them?

HENRY: Hey, don't you be runnin' us down!

PHINEAS: He's just doin' his job. Those reporters, they like to stir up the pot. Don't let him get you all riled up.

HENRY: I reckon you're right. But like I was sayin', I wouldn't exactly say we lost those belts. Cheated out of them would be more like it. You just look at the tapes. The right referee didn't make the count. The match shoulda been stopped when he got knocked out.

Q: I saw what happened. You guys knocked the first referee out. How were you ripped off?

PHINEAS: You need to look at the whole picture. That ref, he let Hawk and Animal have every advantage in the book! As for us, we couldn't take two steps without him tellin' us we were breakin' this rule or that rule! It stunk!

HENRY: Yeah, it stunk! Worse than a dead possum that's been layin' in the hot sun for a week!

Q: How do you plan to regain the title?

PHINEAS: Plan? Ain't no plan! Just get in there and beat those boys is all! As long as those people who make the matches give us our opportunities, me and Henry are gonna be fine!

HENRY: Hawk and Animal are all smug now. They think they got us figured out. Well, boys, you got nothin' figured out, because we learned a lot of tricks growin' up on a farm! Me and Phineas ain't as dumb as people think.

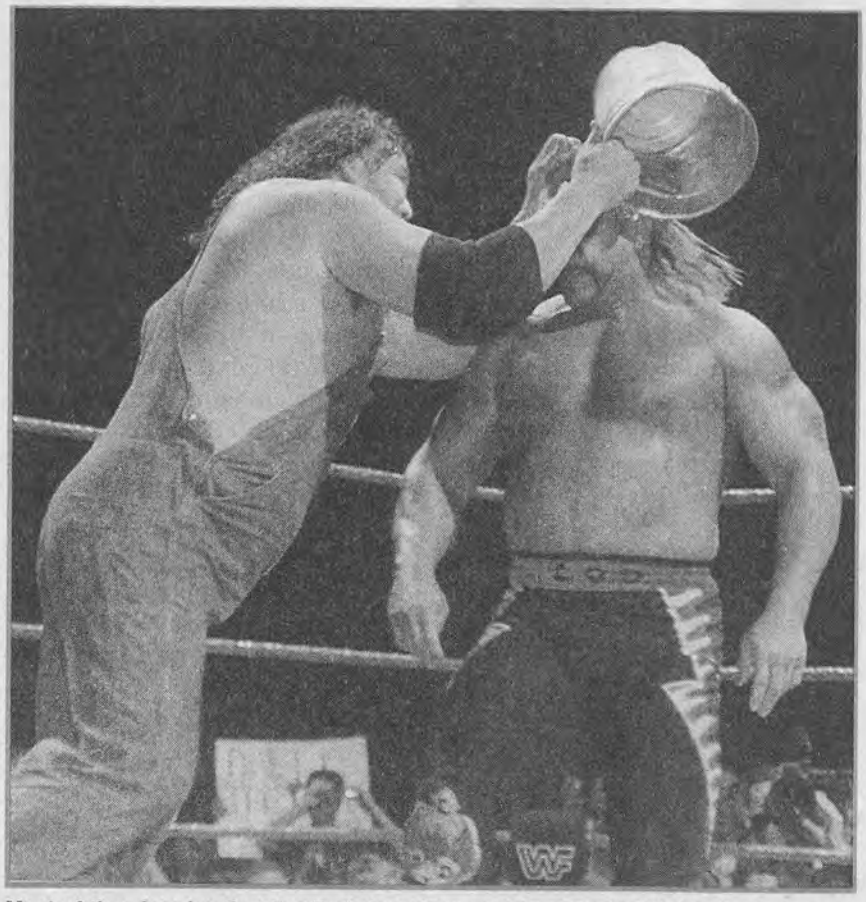
PHINEAS: Hey, Henry, we don't look dumb, do we?

HENRY: Shut up! Anyway, what I'm sayin' is me and Phineas got some tricks up our sleeves as far as gettin' that title back. Just you watch!

Q: Has Uncle Cletus planned those tricks?

PHINEAS: You know, I'm glad you mentioned Uncle Cletus, because I woulda done it anyway. Havin' that man by the ring caused us nothin' but trouble. We thought we could rely on

The Godwinns have done surprisingly well in outside-the-ring brawls with The Road Warriors. They are confident that they will end the Legion of Doom's WWF tag title reign. They have no specific for doing so, however.



Most of the victories that the Godwinns have gotten over the LOD have come as a direct result of this move—the old slop bucket to the head trick!

him 'cause he's kin, but he's as dumb as Hawk and Animal sometimes.

HENRY: Yeah, who needs him?

Q: Was it him who taught you the finer points of using a slop bucket as a weapon?

PHINEAS: Why, as a matter of fact he ... hey, what're you drivin' at? You're sayin' that's all we do? In this sport, you got people like The Road Warriors and those Headbangers, and all they're doin' is figurin' out ways to make us look bad. Well, sometimes you hafta hit somebody upside the head with the slop bucket to knock some sense into him! I don't apologize for that, and neither does Henry. Ain't that right, Henry?

HENRY: We got tired of bein' walked all over. We finally wised up and set things straight. When you mess with us now, you're gonna pay. We'll make sure of that.

Q: Where is Uncle Cletus now?

PHINEAS: Who the hell cares? Far as we're concerned, he ain't got the right to use the fine Godwinn name no more.

HENRY: We don't need no manager standing at ringside to help us. We rely on ourselves.

Q: You're referring to people like your former manager Hillbilly Jim?

HENRY: Um, yeah, Hillbilly Jim is one of those people. First time we hooked up with Jim, it was all good. We put our trust in the man. He made us all sorts of promises. Said if we got the people on our side everything would turn out great. That turned out to be a dirty lie. So you can see what good Hillbilly Jim done us. None at all! Even when we'd lose matches, he'd want us to dance with the people afterward. He's dumber than a barn door.

Q: Do you feel the same way, Phineas?

PHINEAS: Yeah, Henry finally showed me he was bad for our

career. It's like we said with The Road Warriors. Jim is a guy who maybe was a big deal a long time ago, but now he doesn't have a thing to show nobody. The day me and Henry learned that was the day we started on our way to bein' champions.

Q: Would you concede that he led you to some important victories?

PHINEAS: We won a few big matches when he was our manager, that's true. But we didn't win because of him. Me and Henry won due to our own smarts.

HENRY: Are you listenin' to what Phineas is sayin'? I believe I heard just about enough concerning Jim. Go on, what else you gotta ask us?

Q: I wanted to ask you about another ex-manager of yours, Sunny.

PHINEAS: Sunny! Yeah, Sunny!

HENRY: Don't even start thinkin' about her, Phineas. That always gets you into trouble.

Q: Did she almost ruin your careers the way Jim did?

HENRY: She only looks out for herself. I ain't got nothin' good to say about that woman.

PHINEAS: But she does have a real nice ...

HENRY: Shut up, Phineas!

Q: She's offered you quite a distraction, hasn't she, Phineas?

PHINEAS: Well, look at her! You got eyes, right? She's a mighty fine woman!

HENRY: No more on Sunny. Move on to somethin' else or we're leavin'!

Q: Well, let me see ...

HENRY: Why don't you ask us something about, let's see, The Headbangers? We won the belts off them in St. Louis, you know.

Q: Yes, and you lost them to The Road Warriors just two days later.

PHINEAS: Just what are you sayin' there, son? That me and Henry have trouble holding on to the belts? That we're not real champions because real champions have title reigns that last more than two days? Is that what you're sayin'?

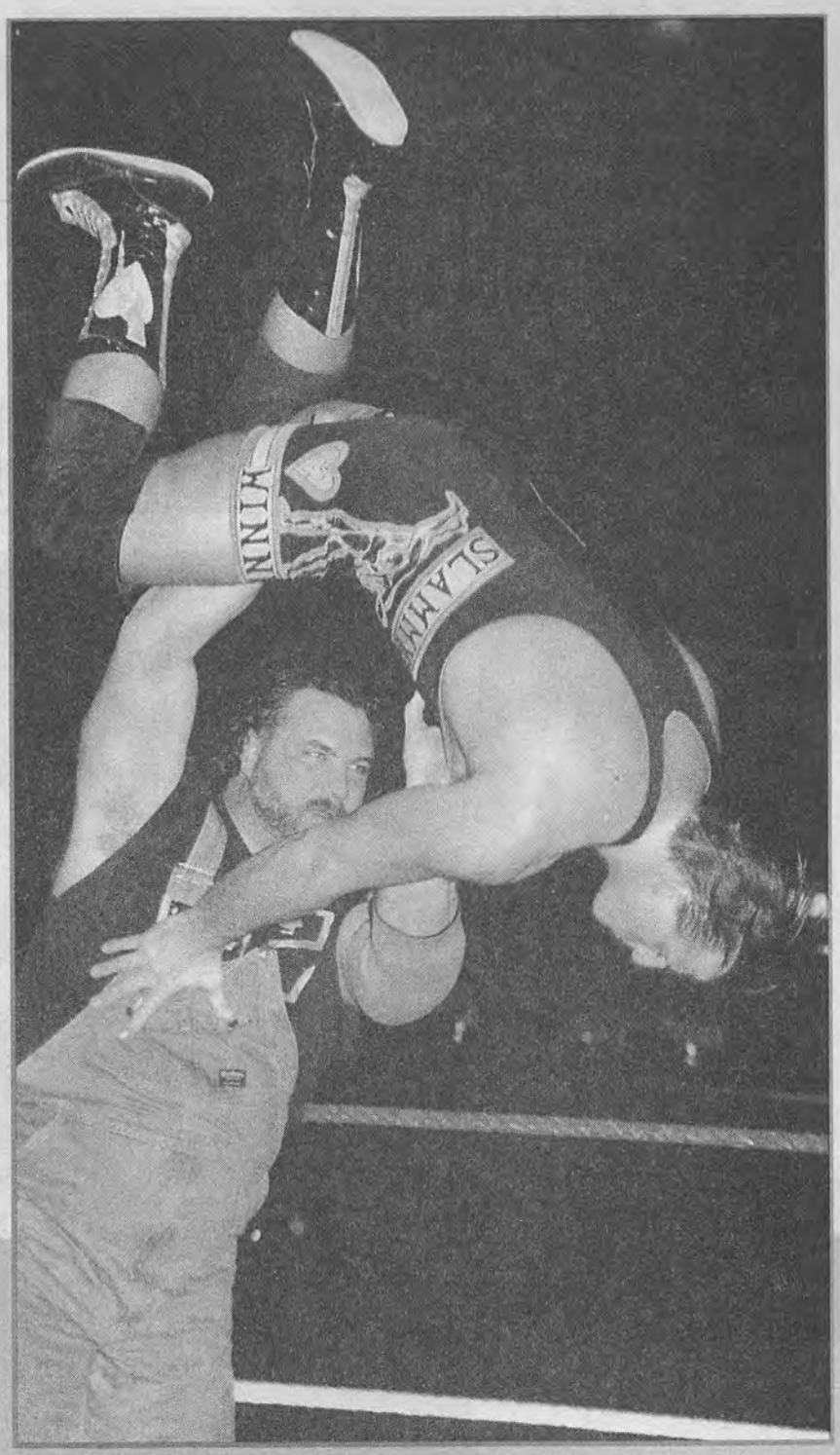
HENRY: I think that's exactly what he's sayin', Phineas.

PHINEAS: Yeah? All that is is what you call a fluke. Our third time as champions is gonna last a lot longer, I promise you that!

Q: Hopefully for you, longer than this interview. Thanks, guys, this was more entertaining than I hoped it would be.

HENRY: Hey, are you sayin' we're clowns or somethin'? Did you see a circus tent?

PHINEAS: The circus? Where? □

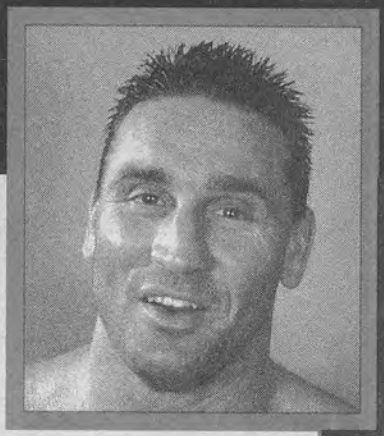


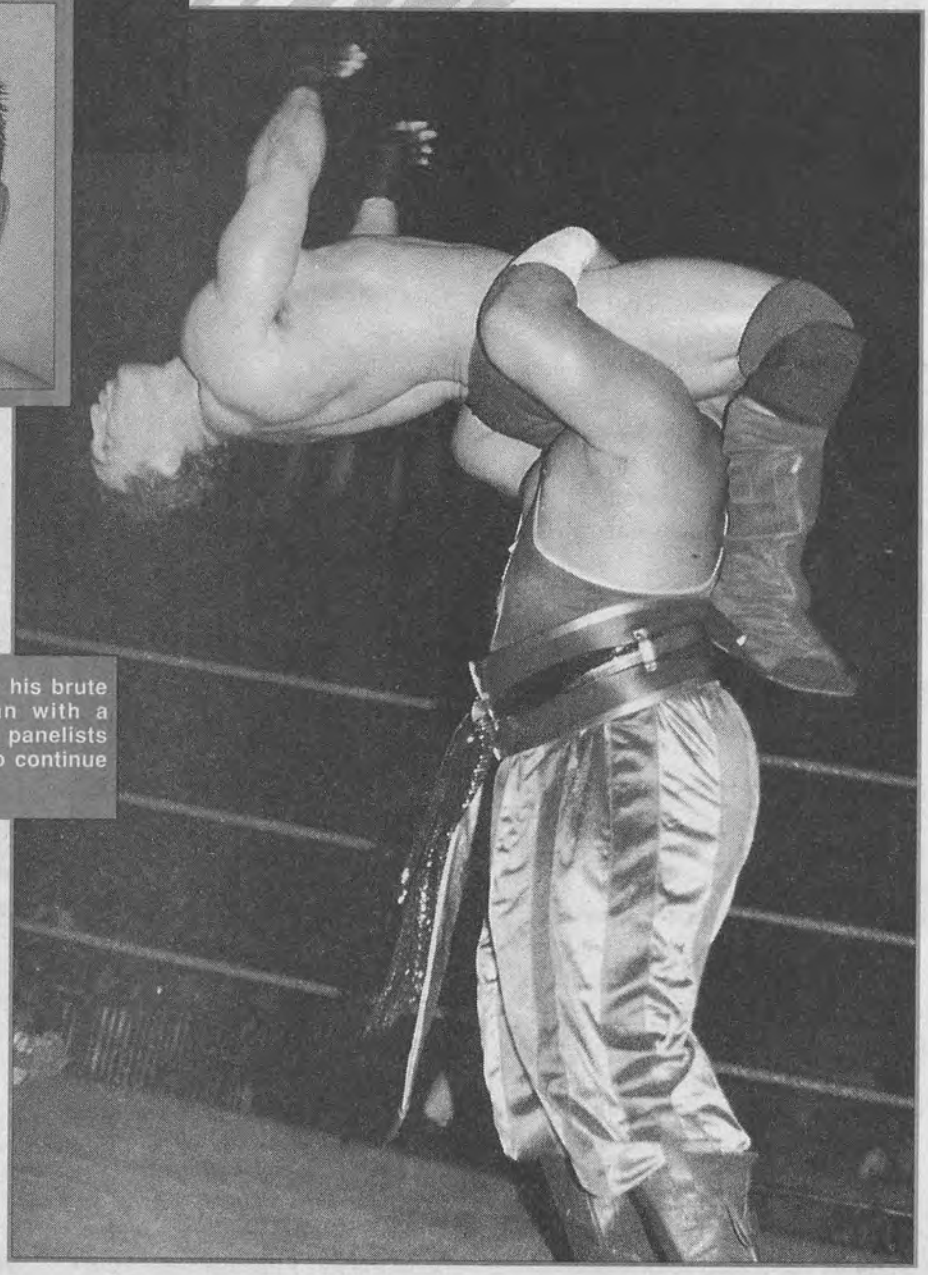
Owen Hart goes flying through the air courtesy of Henry Godwinn. Henry and Phineas won't be happy if they're in the ring with Owen again in the near future. Their only goal is to get more matches with Hawk and Animal.

X-Ray

THE WRESTLER PANEL EXAMINES

KEN SHAMROCK





Ken Shamrock, a man known for his brute strength, surprises The Sultan with a "Frankensteiner." Several of our panelists encourage the former UFC star to continue expanding on his repertoire.

CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Ken Shamrock's probably one of the smartest guys in wrestling right now, baby. He could come charging into that ring every time and try to destroy every one of his opponents in two or three minutes, but he's already learned how important it is to be patient. The Captain likes that about him, daddy. He knows that in some matches, he can't afford to use up that all that energy he's got in the first few minutes. He's finding different ways to win all the time."

Capt. Lou Albano, "The Guiding Light," has led 13 different tag teams to a record 17 WWF World tag team titles.

KILLER KOWALSKI

"This guy Shamrock, I think with the physical tools he's got, he could be a lot tougher on a more consistent basis. Yeah, you see that temper of his rear its ugly head here and there, but you really gotta push him to get him to explode. I don't know why he holds back in so many of his matches. This is man-to-man fighting. You gotta be prepared to beat the hell out of your opponent all the time, not just when they get you mad. He can do better than he's done."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rulebreakers in the history of the sport, runs a wrestling school in Reading, Massachusetts.

HARLEY RACE

"He looks like the complete package to me. I don't see anyone in the WWF who's more powerful than Shamrock, and if you watch him closely, you'll notice that he's adding new moves all the time. Give him another few months maybe and I think you'll see him taking to the air every now and then. The only thing I don't really like about Shamrock is that he goes for those submission leglocks too often and sometimes too early. His opponents are really watching out for that now."

Harley Race, an eight-time NWA World champion, has also managed such stars as Lex Luger and Big Van Vader.

FABULOUS MOOLAH

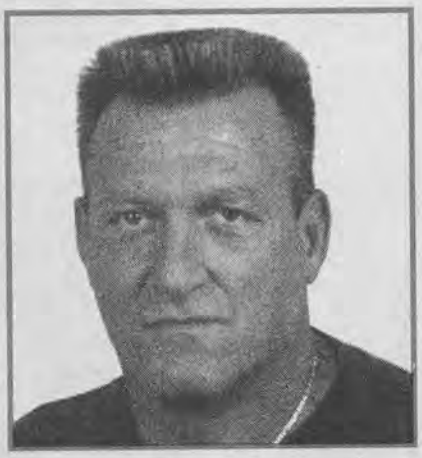
"This young man is strong and dangerous, hon. I like his attitude. All business. Seems polite away from the ring, but when the bell rings, there's no showboating or wasting time. He's out to win, and that's the way it ought to be with every wrestler. He's going 100 percent all the time, and he usually puts his opponents away in less than 10 minutes. I just hope he isn't getting too used to short matches. I hope he has the stamina to do well in the real long ones."

Fabulous Moolah, the greatest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for 28 years. She now trains wrestlers in Columbia, South Carolina.

OLE ANDERSON

"I've always told young guys just getting into this sport that you can never show the guy you're wrestling any fear. You do that and you're well on your way to a humiliating loss. I've never seen Shamrock back down from anyone. Don't think the other wrestlers in the WWF haven't noticed that. He showed right from the start that he can't be psyched out. I think matches between him and Steve Austin would be interesting. I'd like to find out which one of those two is tougher."

Ole Anderson, a five-time former NWA World tag team champion and founding member of The Four Horsemen, has been retired for several years.

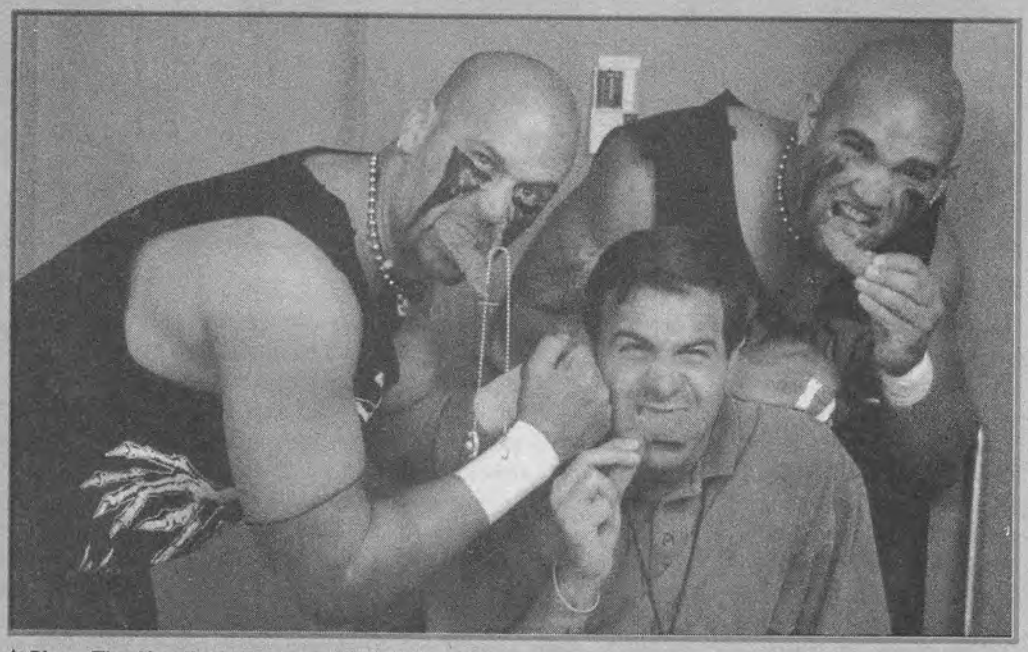


PAUL ORNDORFF

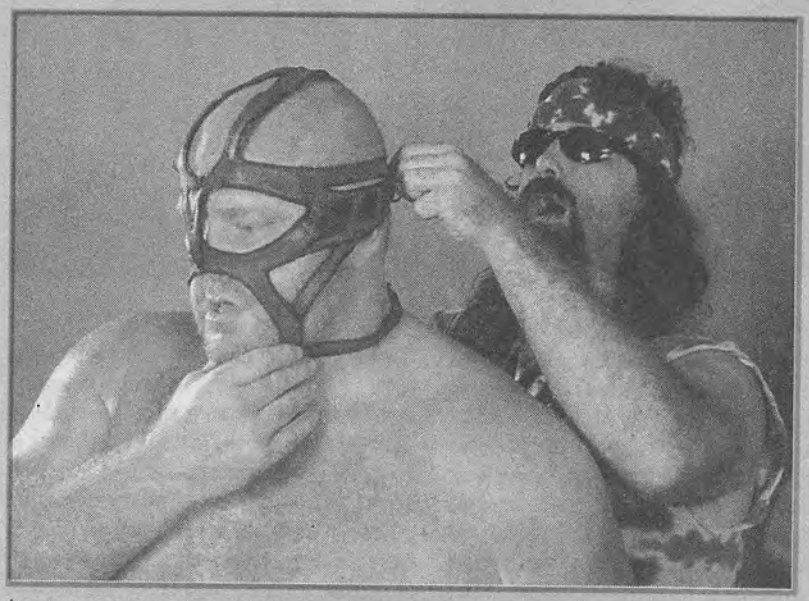
"I'm not sure if an Ultimate Fighting background really helps you when you're looking to make it as a wrestler. Makes you tougher, I guess, but a lot of the moves you use in the UFC don't work in a wrestling ring. Shamrock has to diversify his attack if he's going to succeed for a long time and maybe win a world title. I also think he needs to improve on his speed and mobility. If he was a little quicker, he could make his opponents chase him more and tire them out."

Former WCW TV and World tag team champion Paul Orndorff retired from active competition after suffering a neck injury in December 1995.

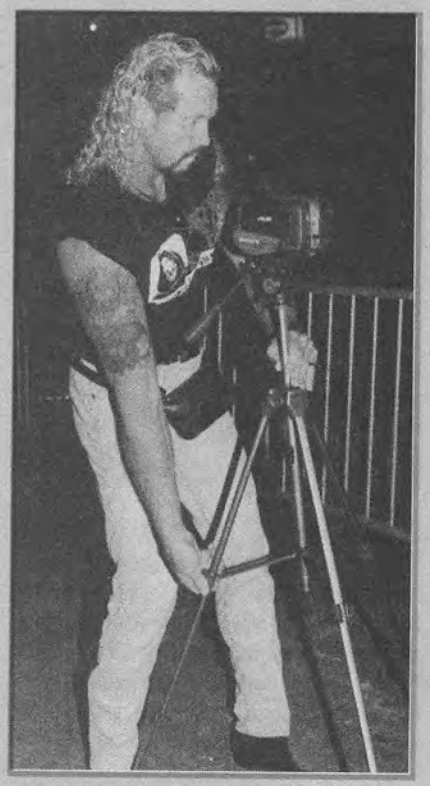
Beyond THE SQUARED CIRCLE



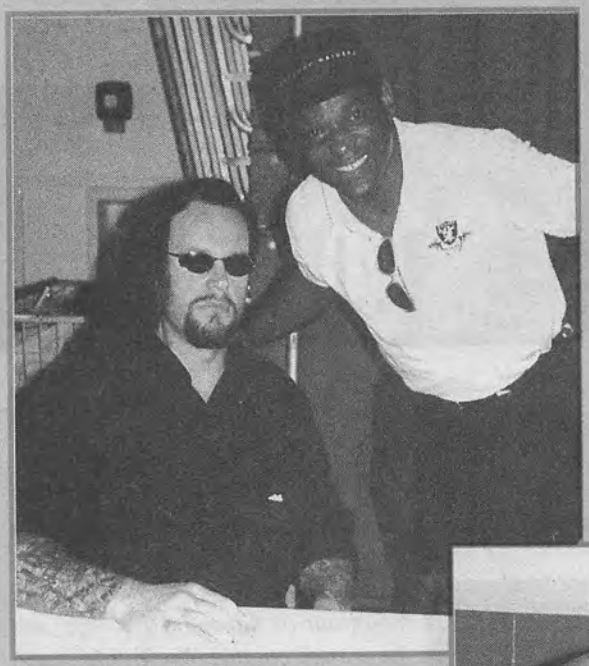
▲ Since The Headbangers won the WWF tag team title, a lot of people have wanted to have pictures taken with them. Here Jay Andronaco, the WWF director of public relations, enjoys some buffalo wings with Mosh and Thrasher.



▲ Remember how Big Van Vader nearly ended Cactus Jack's career with some vicious power bombs in 1993? Cactus might still be bitter about that, but Dude Love, one of Jack's alter egos, was happy to help Vader adjust his mask.

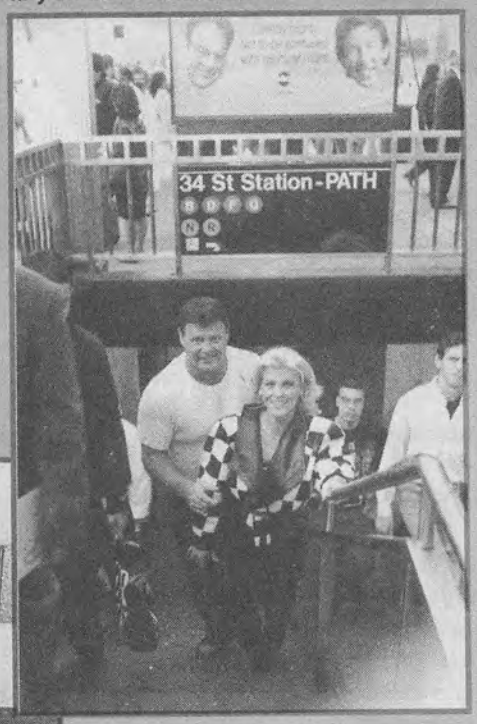


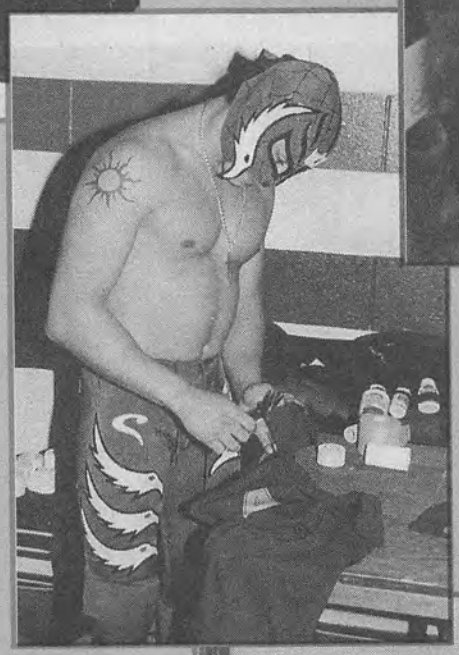
▲ We knew Dallas Page was serious about scouting his future opponents, but we didn't think he'd go so far as to use his own video camera to record them himself.



▲ Former Oakland Raiders defensive back Jack Tatum was known for his brutal hits on the football field, but we're certain he wouldn't want to be victimized by The Undertaker's "tombstone" piledriver.

▼ When Jerry Lawler arrived in New York City for a WWF card recently, he brought along Stacy, who has done some commentary on USWA telecasts.





◀ When you're on the road as often as Rey Misterio Jr. is, you don't always have time to take your clothes to a tailor when you need them repaired. Rey often has to do the work himself.

▲ When Barbara Blayze, a woman wrestler in Mexico, strapped this collar around the neck of Lizmark Jr., we got the impression it was a bit too tight for his liking.

▲ Rockabilly is as obnoxious as anyone when he's showing off in the ring, but he's quite serious when he's preparing for a match. He spends a lot of time getting loose.

Spot Light ON...

LEX LUGER

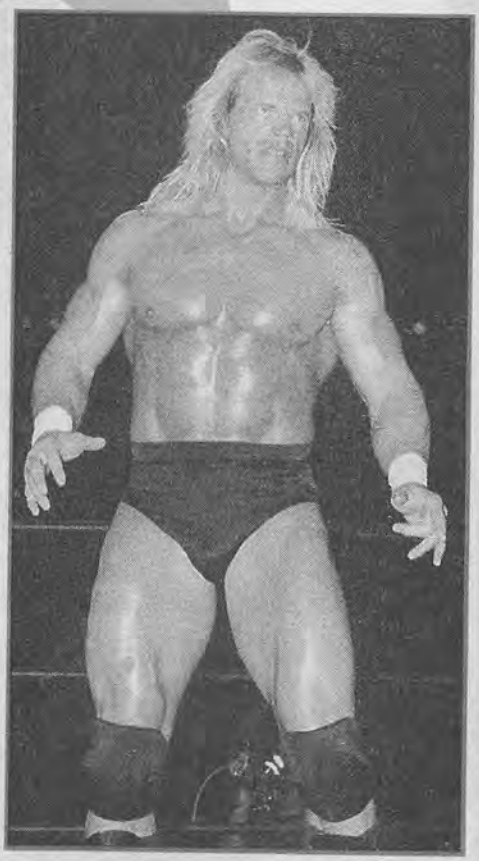
IN 1986, A lot of wrestling experts predicted Lex Luger would become "the next Hulk Hogan." That really wasn't fair to Luger. Asking anyone to become the next Hulk Hogan is asking the impossible. But Luger has had a fine career.

Luger made his pro debut in 1985 after being trained by Bob Roop and Hiro Matsuda. His Herculean physique and raw potential impressed Ric Flair and J.J. Dillon, who offered him Ole Anderson's spot in The Four Horsemen in 1987.

Luger won his first major title, the NWA U.S. belt, while he was a Horseman, as J.J. Dillon interfered in a cage match between Lex and Nikita Koloff. He went on to win the U.S title three more times.

But after failing to beat Ric Flair for the NWA World title numerous times in 1988 and 1989, Luger finally captured the belt by defeating Barry Windham in a cage match for the vacant WCW World title in 1992. Lex's fans were overjoyed until Luger informed the world he had signed Harley Race as his manager.

After months of successful defenses against the likes of Ron Simmons and Rick Steiner, Luger lost the belt to Sting. Devastated, he left WCW for Vince McMahon's World Bodybuilding Federation. Shortly after signing with the WBF, he suffered an arm injury in a motorcycle accident.



The injury required the insertion of a steel plate in his right arm, a weapon he used when he finally returned to the ring in the WWF.

After competing for several months as the rulebreaking "Narcissist," Luger became more inspired after he defended America's honor by bodyslamming WWF champ Yokozuna aboard the U.S.S. Intrepid on July 4, 1993.

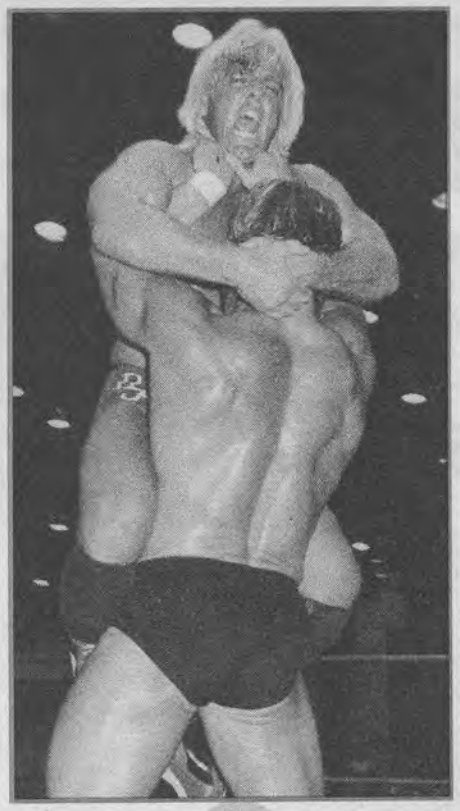
Luger defeated Yokozuna by countout at SummerSlam '93, and he earned another World title match when he and Bret Hart co-won the 1994 Royal Rumble. Luger, however, also failed to win the belt at WrestleMania X.

After going through long feuds with Ludvig Borga and Tatanka, Luger tried teaming with Davey Boy Smith for a while. But in September 1995, he left the WWF and made a surprise appearance at the first ***WCW Monday Nitro.***

Luger's new all-for-me attitude soon made others in WCW wary of his intentions. Long-time friend and former rival Sting came to his defense, though, and the two won the WCW tag title. For a while, Lex held the World tag team title and the WCW TV belt simultaneously.

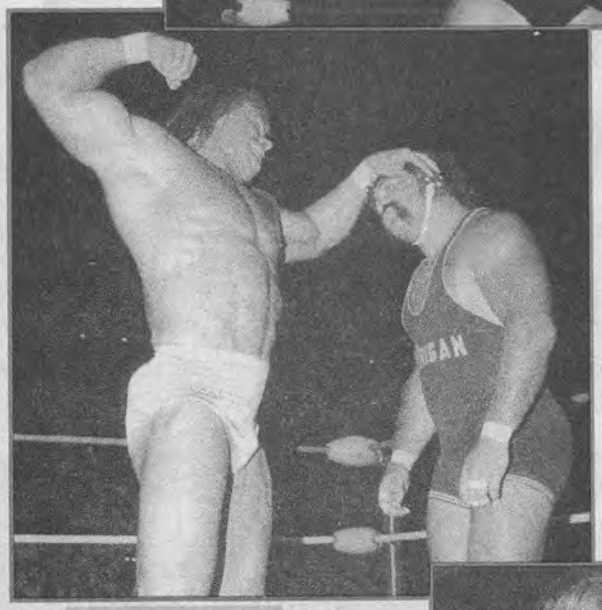
When doubts of Sting's loyalties to WCW arose in the summer of 1996, Luger became WCW's flagbearer, and he has since feuded with every major NWO player.

Luger finally found success in a huge match again when he made WCW champ Hogan submit to the "human torture rack" in August. However, the celebration was short, as Hogan regained the belt five days later. Lex's tag team with The Giant is now one of the most effective in WCW, but most fans would love to see him take yet another run at the World title.



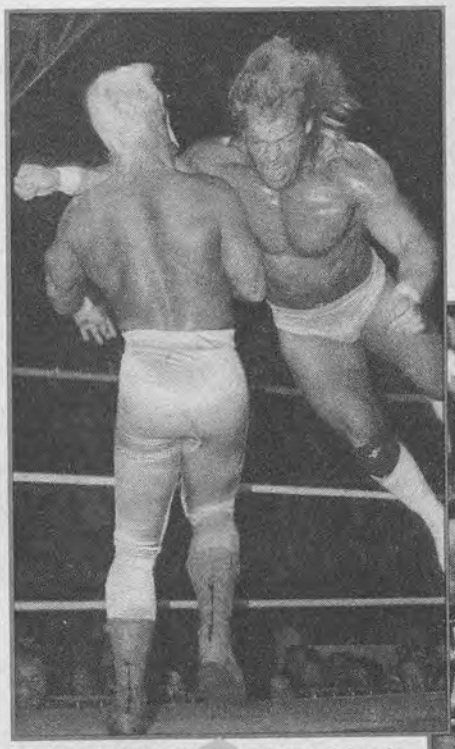
May 1986: The power of Lex Luger was at times just too much for Ric Flair to handle 11 years ago. Less than one year later, Flair and his cohorts welcomed Lex into The Four Horsemen.

December 1987: Luger won his first title in the NWA when he defeated Nikita Koloff for the U.S. championship. How many matches has the "torture rack" won him over the years?

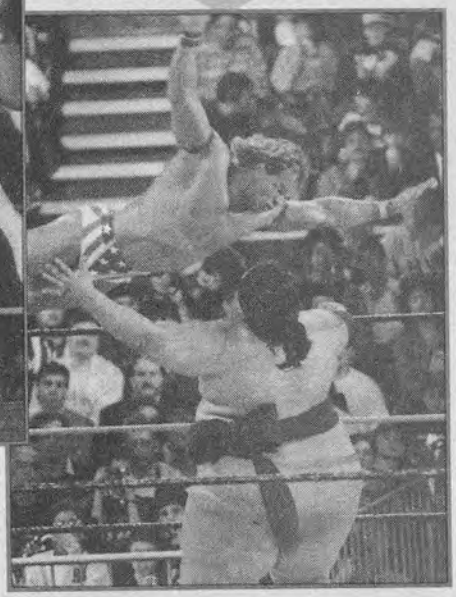


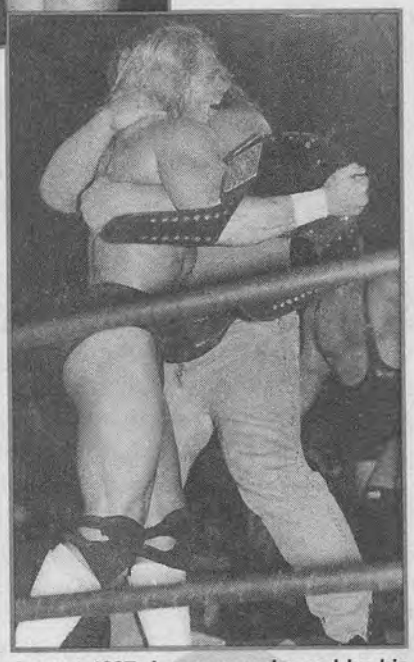
March 1994: Luger did something he rarely does in a match against Yokozuna for the WWF World title at WrestleMania X: He went to the air. He lost the match by disqualification.

August 1989: In the midst of his third U.S. title reign, Lex battled a young Rick Steiner. The two men would also meet in tag team competition in later years.



October 1989: They've been friends and business partners for a good portion of their careers, but Lex and Sting have had a few wars along the way. Here Luger levels Sting with a powerful clothesline.





August 1997: Lex was embraced by his friend and tag team partner The Giant after he defeated Hulk Hogan by submission for his second WCW World title. Hogan regained the belt five days later.

TOO MUCH ON

Why Her Helmsley-Michaels Plan Is Destined To Shatter

Chyna rarely speaks when she comes out to the ring with Shawn Michaels and Hunter Hearst Helmsley, but behind the scenes, we're discovering, she's quite the schemer. Now it looks like she's setting The Kliq up for disaster

By Bryan Ethier

A QUICK GLANCE at the physique of Chyna suggests she is better suited to moving bodies than to influencing minds. The Clydesdalian bodybuilder has, however, secretly undertaken a scheme that she hopes will lead she and Hunter Hearst Helmsley to success beyond their wildest dreams.

The clandestine plan also includes Shawn Michaels, leaving one to wonder whether Chyna should stick to clean-and-jerking Chryslers instead of trying to get unclean jerks to follow along in her chicanery.

This strategy, according to a source close to the situation, has been laid out so covertly and so subtly that neither wrestler suspects he is being manipulated.

"It's really quite an intriguing blueprint for success, if Chyna can make it work," concluded one reliable source, who chose to remain anonymous. "But can it work? This is Chyna, remember. This is a delicate mind game she's playing with two men who take paranoia to high levels. Both of them have spent a good portion of their time in the WWF being protected by bodyguards. They constantly look over their shoulders."

The far-reaching specifics of this Chyna plan are not entirely clear. Step number one, according to those close to Chyna, was bringing HHH and Michaels together as a team. At first, their primary focus

CHYNA'S PLATE?

was upsetting and undermining The Undertaker. Both men have repeatedly assailed the former WWF champion, often leaving him in a crumpled heap. Same goes for Bret Hart and others brave or dumb enough to take sides against "The Heartbreak Kid" and the master of the "pedigree."

But getting two underhanded rulebreakers to unite against a bitter enemy is no act of a wizard. Here's where step two begins:

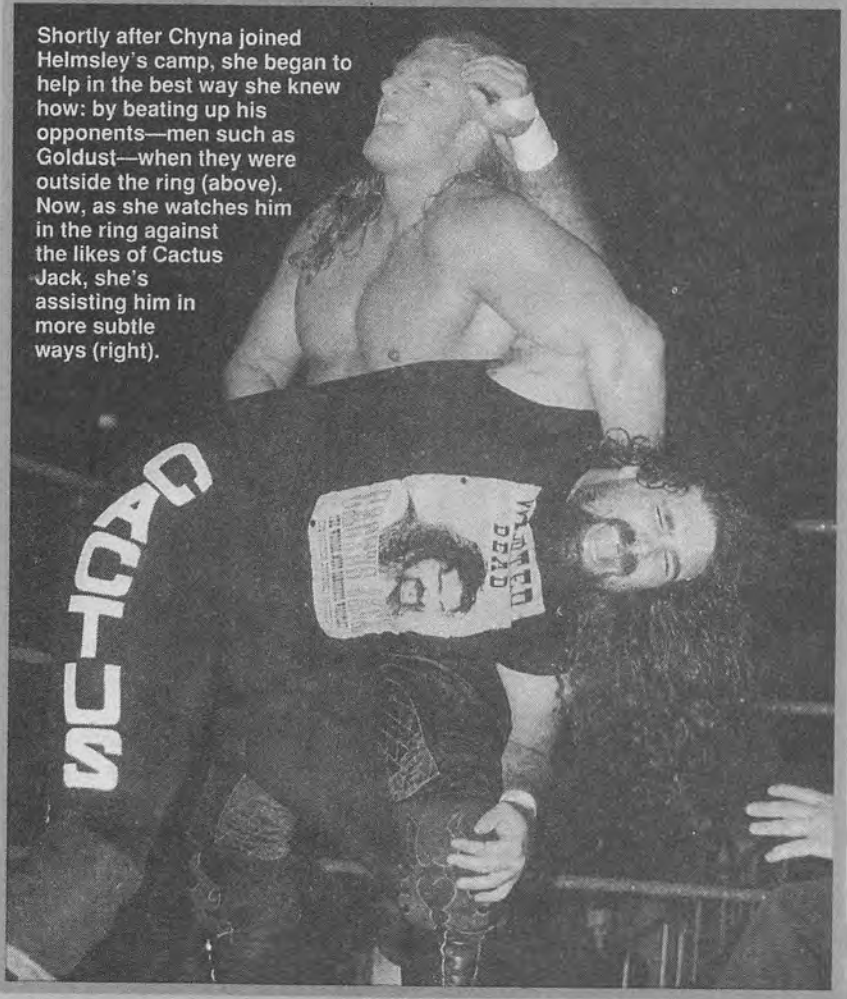
"Watch these two guys when they are in the ring together and beating the hell out of other wrestlers," said Ken Shamrock. "They share the same hatred of others, and they're so willing to break the rules to get their names in the headlines. I don't know of any two guys who crave the public spotlight more than Helmsley and Michaels. They're made for each other."

Somehow Chyna has been able to give them both time in the

limelight; in that sense, she is the baseball manager trying to get all of her stars equal playing time. According to our source, a woman who has trained with Chyna on occasion, that has been the heart of stage two of the Chyna plan: Play each man off the other.

"The key to this formula is getting each wrestler to be at his absolute best at all times," she said, "but to succeed, Chyna has to make sure neither man is aware of what's going on. She told me what she'll do when she's around Hunter and not Shawn is casually mention how great Shawn's last match was or how great he did this. It's her way of inspiring Hunter to try to be even better than Shawn the next time *he* wrestles.

"She does the same thing with Shawn. She just mentions in an off-hand way that Hunter has really risen to Shawn's level so quickly. Shawn always has to feel he's the best, so she's hoping this inspires him to make himself look even better than Hunter."



Shortly after Chyna joined Helmsley's camp, she began to help in the best way she knew how: by beating up his opponents—men such as Goldust—when they were outside the ring (above). Now, as she watches him in the ring against the likes of Cactus Jack, she's assisting him in more subtle ways (right).

Truth is, Helmsley has done little since winning the King of the Ring tournament in June. If Chyna has divined that her boss needs help in the self-esteem department, then perhaps she's more insightful than anyone has given her credit for.

But there are subtle signs slipping through the cracks of the foundation of this team that suggest Chyna's plan may ultimately backfire.

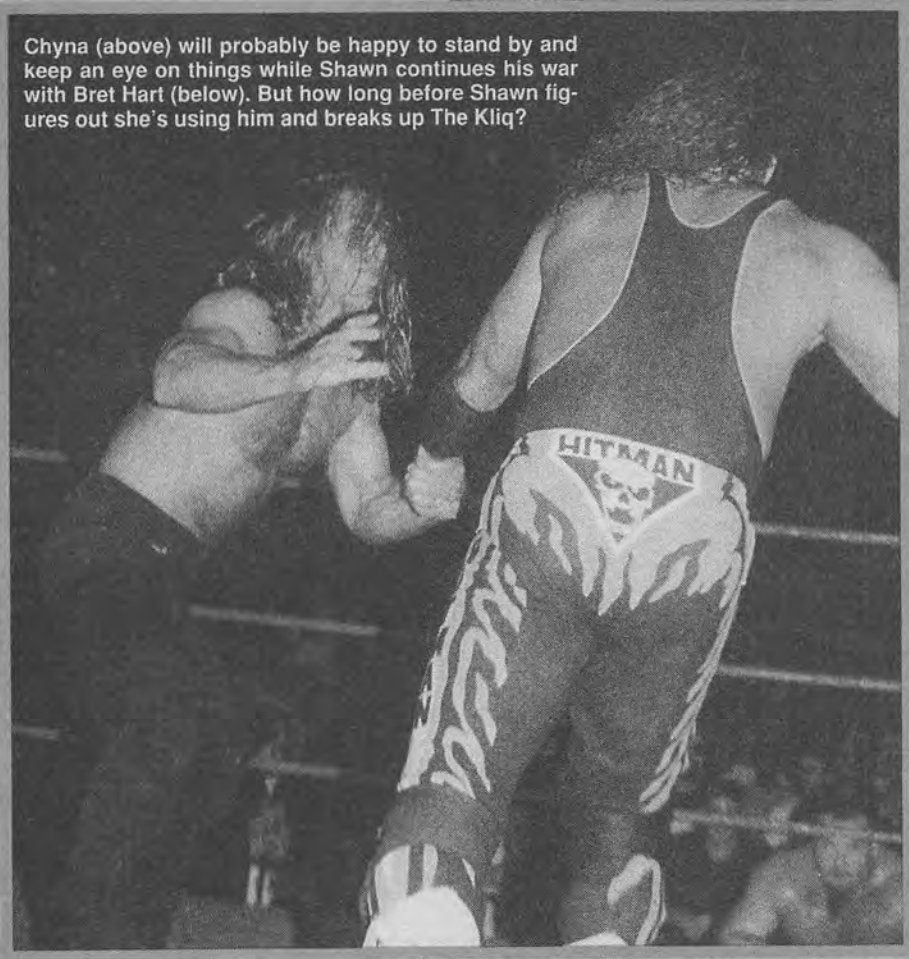
"Chyna has been able to keep these two egomaniacs happy by keeping their fires stoked at comparable temperatures," continued our source. "I see this failing, though, and I see Michaels showing signs of impatience with this unofficial agreement between him and Hunter. Sooner or later, he'll get tired of sharing the limelight with Hunter. Either that or Hunter will get tired of hearing Chyna talk about Shawn and will realize that he really is good enough to go it alone. Either way, Chyna loses big-time."

If this is an accurate assessment, then it seems time will indeed betray Chyna, whose plan appears to lack the foresight attendant to a career in the mat sport. Remember, Chyna is not a pro wrestler, nor does she boast much managerial experience at this level.

By playing both sides of the wrestlers' egos, she is setting herself up for a whiplash effect that could cost her her job and perhaps her health. Chyna may have the brawn to physically support her grapplers in a fray. But can she control their emotions and motivations?

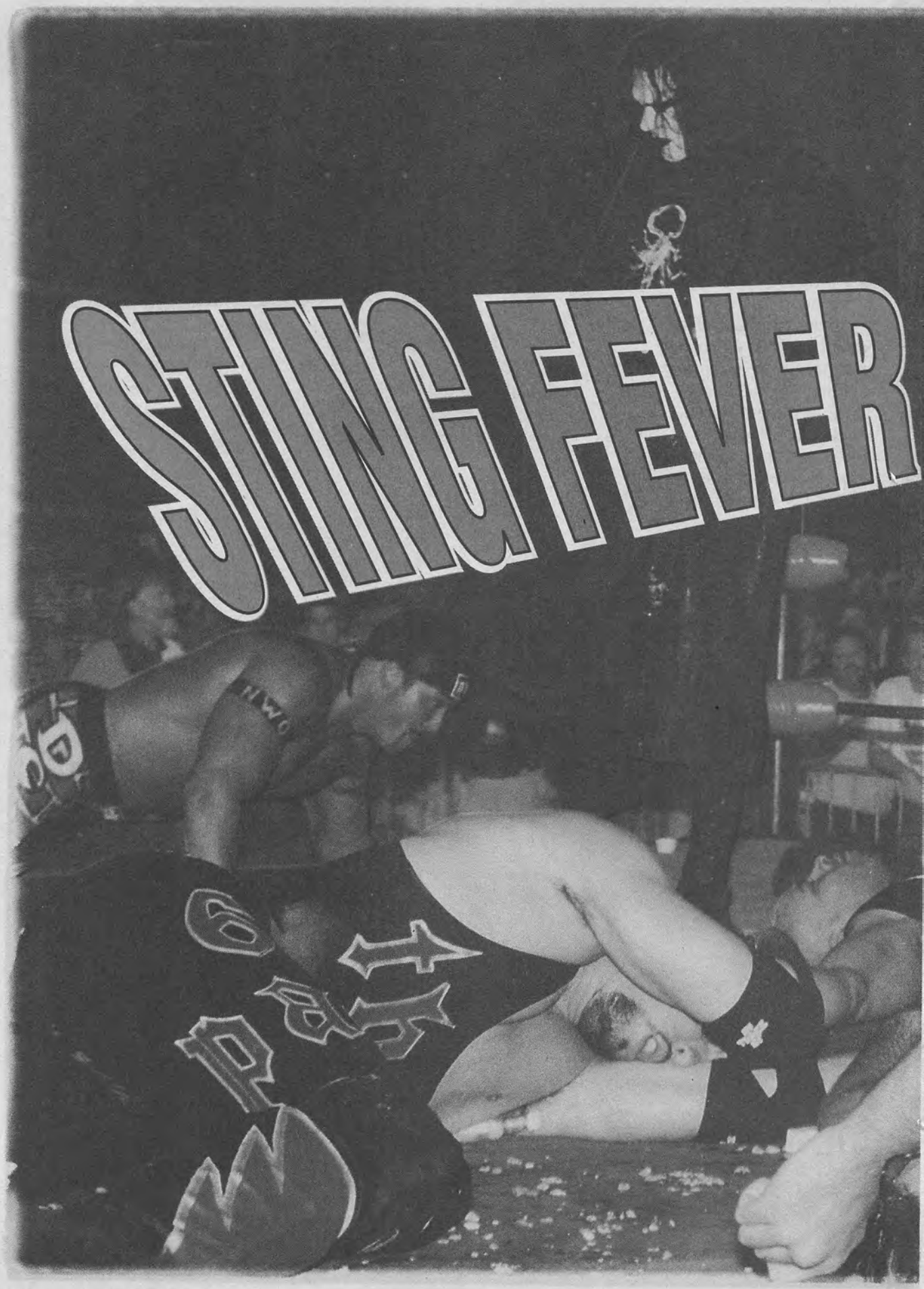
"If she moves ahead with this scheme, in its present state, I'm absolutely convinced she will eventually cause a rift that will splinter this Kliq," said our source. "There is just too much ego in this trio. At some point, it will boil over. In my opinion, Shawn will be the one to put an end to it. Right now, Shawn thinks Bret Hart is public enemy number one. But Bret impels Shawn to move forward. These little skirmishes he engages in with Helmsley do little for his career. Hunter may be too dumb or lazy to care; Shawn does care, and he will soon do something about it. And that will finally light the light bulb in Helmsley's head. He'll understand how Chyna has been using him."

If that happens, The Kliq will fall apart, and Chyna the schemer will be left alone to pore over the blueprints of a master plan gone badly awry. □



Chyna (above) will probably be happy to stand by and keep an eye on things while Shawn continues his war with Bret Hart (below). But how long before Shawn figures out she's using him and breaks up The Kliq?

STING FEVER



Silence has been golden for a man named Sting. For more than a year, he has kept quiet both in and out of the ring. But for a man who says and does so little, he has the entire wrestling world hanging on his every word and action

STRIKES!

And The NWO Can't Find The Cure

By Steve Anderson

"I have never wished to cater to the crowd; for what I know they do not approve, and what they approve I do not know."

—Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 B.C.)

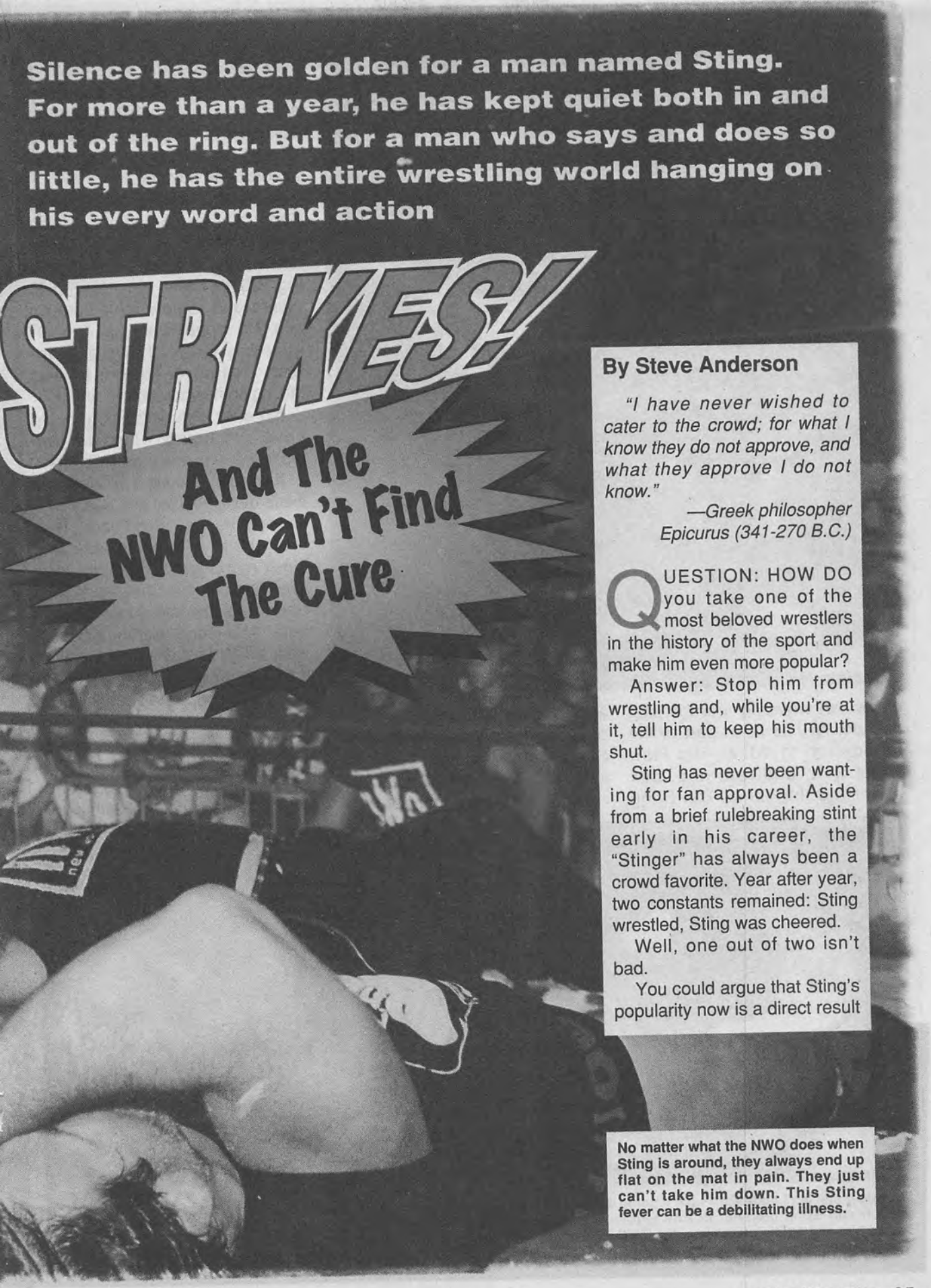
QUESTION: HOW DO you take one of the most beloved wrestlers in the history of the sport and make him even more popular?

Answer: Stop him from wrestling and, while you're at it, tell him to keep his mouth shut.

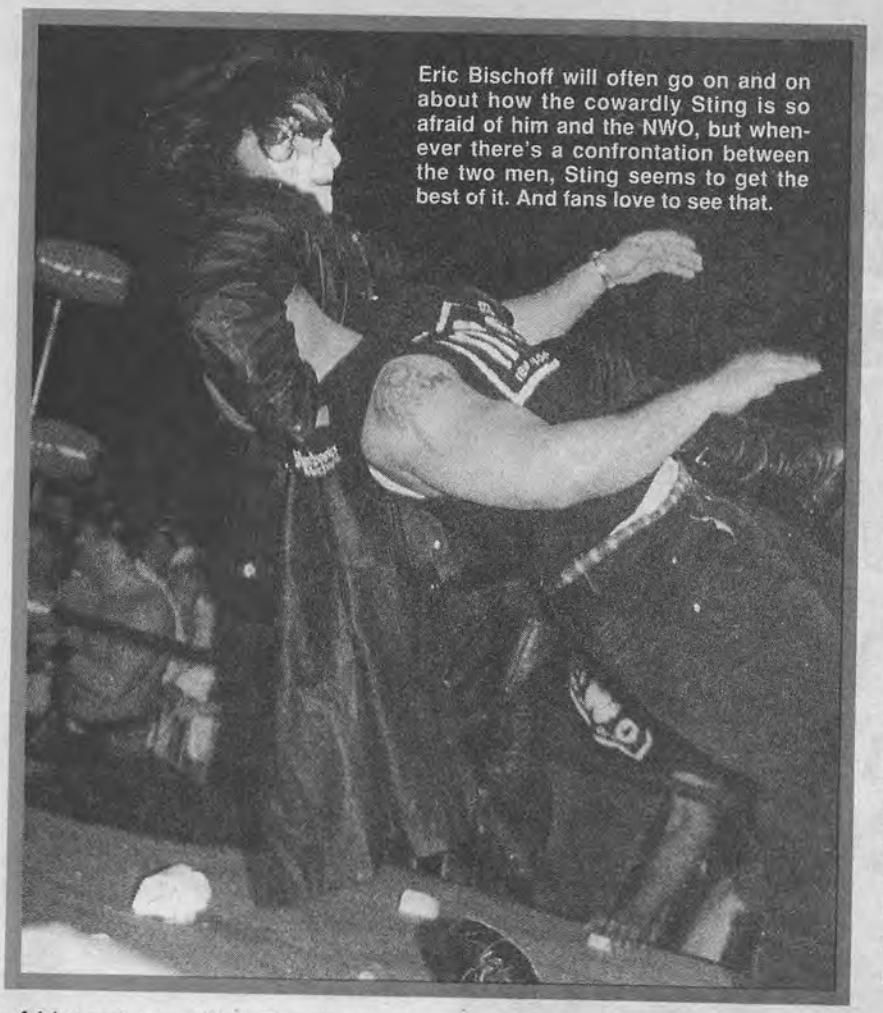
Sting has never been wanting for fan approval. Aside from a brief rulebreaking stint early in his career, the "Stinger" has always been a crowd favorite. Year after year, two constants remained: Sting wrestled, Sting was cheered.

Well, one out of two isn't bad.

You could argue that Sting's popularity now is a direct result



No matter what the NWO does when Sting is around, they always end up flat on the mat in pain. They just can't take him down. This Sting fever can be a debilitating illness.



Eric Bischoff will often go on and on about how the cowardly Sting is so afraid of him and the NWO, but whenever there's a confrontation between the two men, Sting seems to get the best of it. And fans love to see that.

of him not wrestling. For the past decade, he has been part of the foundation of WCW. Ric Flair came, left, and returned. Lex Luger did the same. But Sting always stayed around. Some people considered that a fault. Same Sting. Same location. Same old same old. Give us something new.

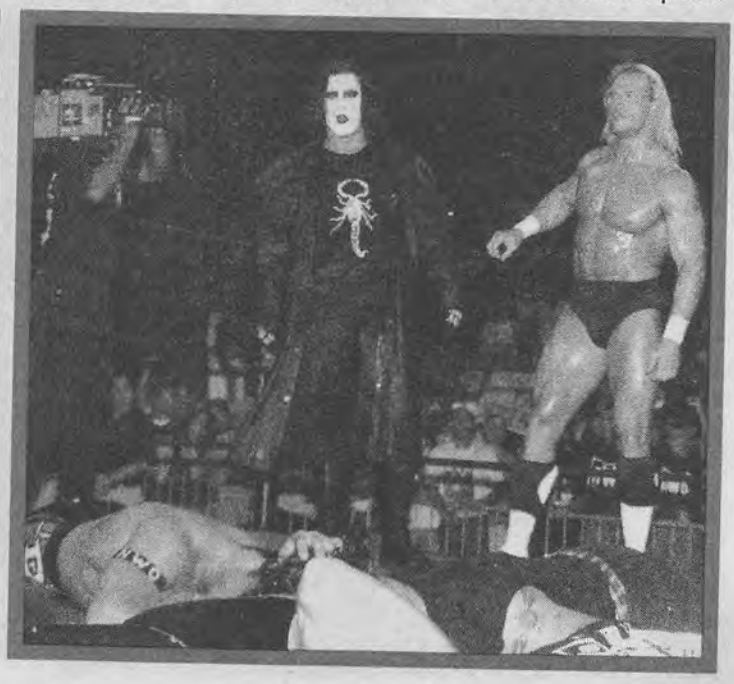
"I always liked Sting, but for so long, he never did anything new," said Missy Jackson, a 15-year-old fan from West St. Paul, Minnesota. "Now he's got this eerie—I don't know—presence or something to him. His lack of emotion is almost overpowering."

But after the NWO attempted to Xerox him last September, Sting decided to change, and he chose not to wrestle for anyone, including WCW. Fans were forced to pause and review their take on him. No longer were his appearances at WCW shows guaranteed. You never knew if he was lurking somewhere in the arena.

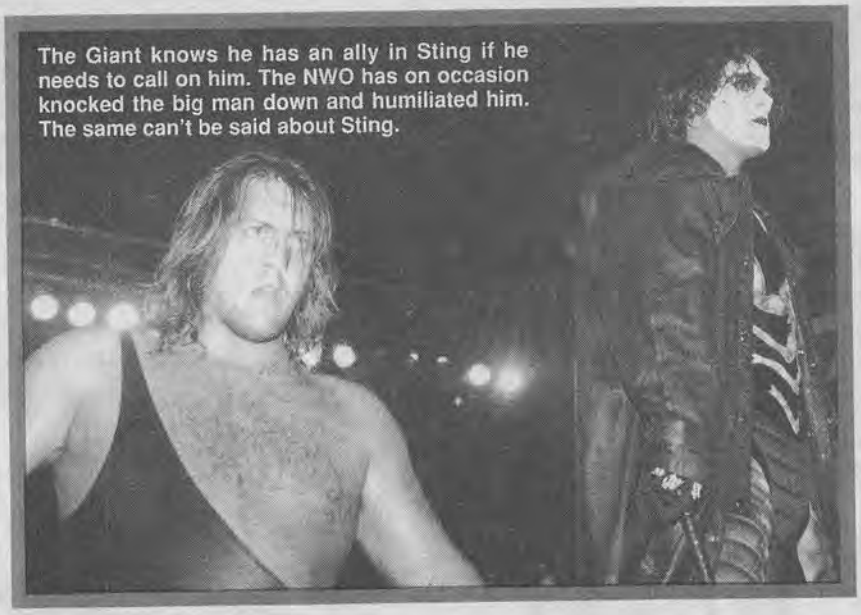
No one, including Sting, could have predicted what the fan response was going to be to this.

If you look around a WCW arena these days, you will see many fans sporting the "new Sting" look. They are replete with white face and black markings to highlight their eyes and mouths. They wear long, black coats and tote plastic baseball bats. And Sting merchandise ... well, WCW is having a hard time meeting the demand.

And Sting's popularity has spawned an increasing number of fan clubs. The macabre look is appealing to the kind of fan who was bored with Sting's blond, spiked hair and colorful face paint.



Lex Luger still isn't quite sure what's going on with his good friend Sting (above). But he enjoys standing beside him and helping him leave the NWO in a crumpled heap (right).



The Giant knows he has an ally in Sting if he needs to call on him. The NWO has on occasion knocked the big man down and humiliated him. The same can't be said about Sting.

"Sting is cool, and people want to talk about him. They want to try to figure out what he's going to do next," said Tony Zadra, president of a Sting fan club in Spokane, Washington. "His whole new look is getting so popular. Even over Halloween, I couldn't keep track of all the Sting imitators that I saw just in my little neighborhood."

Which brings us back to the NWO. For the most part, the group has succeeded in neutralizing nearly every wrestler in WCW. They got the World title back from Lex Luger just five days after the "Total Package" dethroned Hulk Hogan. They have laid out, humiliated, and spray-painted Roddy Piper, "Diamond" Dallas Page, and The Giant numerous times. But there is one man over whom they have yet to gain any type of tactical advantage: Sting. Ask any NWO member about this and you're likely to get the same answer. To wit:

"Sting is too busy running from us, brother," claimed Hogan. "It's hard to hit a target that's running away from you. If those idiots want to cheer for that coward, well, that's their problem."

Like Sting, Hogan and the NWO have quite a fan following. When they enter arenas, the cheers they hear often drown out the boos. Except when Sting confronts them, that is. He immediately is treated like the superhero flying in (or dropping down from the rafters) to save the day.

Hogan and company have tried everything in their power to stop him. Recruiting him ... befriending him ... attacking him en masse. Nothing works. The cheers for Sting just get louder and louder. How does he feel about his popularity? We don't know. He isn't talking.

Many say that sooner or later, Sting will have to talk. But does he? Or should he? Sting's maudlin mystique is predicated on his silence and inactivity. When he does return to a full-time wrestling schedule, does he remain silent? Would the active Sting have to revert to the old look and the old ways? One year ago, he wanted to make a statement. He was hurt when his character and loyalty were questioned by friends and fans, so he stopped talking. They're not being questioned anymore, so his point has been proven. But can Sting go back to the colorful personality that made him a star in the first place?

"I think Sting will talk to the fans again sometime," said his best friend, Lex Luger. "I know everyone wants to hear from him, but it's great to see the NWO so confused by what he's doing. Maybe it's better for WCW if he remains quiet."

Whichever Sting emerges in the next few months, you can be certain fans will never look at him the same way again. They now see a man who took a chance and made an impact by doing little and saying even less. He continues to be a hero, but this time with greater conviction and strength of character. He has taught us all a lesson about taking things for granted.

Or was that lesson taking *Sting* for granted? □

It took J.J. Dillon a surprisingly long time to figure out that to get Sting to return to competition, he had to guarantee him a match with Hulk Hogan. Will Sting remain this popular when he returns to action full-time?

AMARILLO DOUBLE-CROSS:

HOW BRET TOOK THE HEART OUT OF TERRY FUNK

Terry Funk was in a lot of pain when Bret wrenched his ankle. The "Hitman"—or someone close to him— did a lot to try to spoil what was a great night in Amarillo for the Funk family.

Terry Funk used to have a lot of respect for Bret Hart. His feelings for the "Hitman" changed, however, after Bret ruined what could have been the greatest night in Funk's career

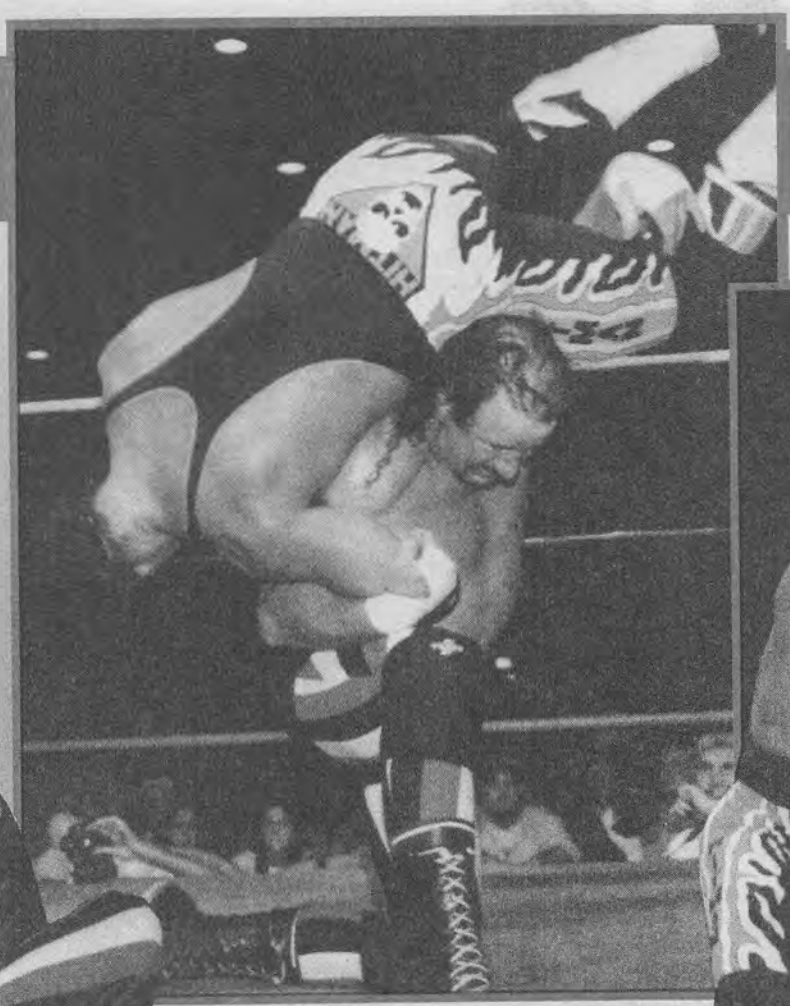
By Bryan Ethier

A NIGHT THAT would culminate in treachery began as a tribute to one of wrestling's all-time greats.

Scene: The squared circle, Amarillo, Texas. Main event—WWF champion Bret Hart vs. former NWA World and ECW heavyweight champ Terry Funk. The pride of Canada against the heart and soul of Texas on the night the city celebrated 50 years of the Funk family (Terry, Dory Sr., and Dory Jr.) competing in Amarillo.

For Terry Funk, the night was the equivalent of the Academy Awards.

Photos by George Tahinos



Even though his match with Bret turned out to be a non-title bout and he didn't have to worry about getting disqualified, Funk tried to outwrestle Hart. He used a fireman's carry (above) and tried to block Bret's suplex (right). He had trained as if it were a title bout.

Minutes before taking the stage against another wrestler afforded reverential treatment, Funk accepted the lifetime heavyweight champion award from ECW's Paul E. Dangerously. The honor rendered Funk virtually speechless. A man forever bent on satisfying the insatiable hunger of his fans, Funk finally got his due reward.

But that was just the beginning of an unforgettable night. Hart next gave a stirring tribute to a man he clearly admires. The "Hitman" recounted the days many years ago when he lived with Funk and family and learned about wrestling.

It was a stirring speech rendered by a frequently bitter man.

What no one knew at the moment was that Bret Hart had already pinned Terry Funk; a night filled with such promise and affection was about to end in disappointment for Terry.

Scene: A bloodied Terry Funk and Bret Hart tangle in mid-ring like prehistoric monsters.

This battle seemed destined to last beyond eternity until Funk failed to properly execute a belly-to-back suplex. Both men were prone on the mat, their shoulders pinned. Hart, however, had the presence of mind to raise his during the referee's three-count.

A stunned Terry Funk stared in disbelief. His final match in his hometown ended in bitter defeat.

It should have come as no surprise to Terry Funk that his trumpeted match with Bret ended in a stinging loss. Funk knew the moment he entered the arena that night that he had lost the battle.

To fully grasp why a Funk loss was a virtual lock, we need to step back to the days prior to the match, when the real story started.

According to sources within the Funk camp, the match originally

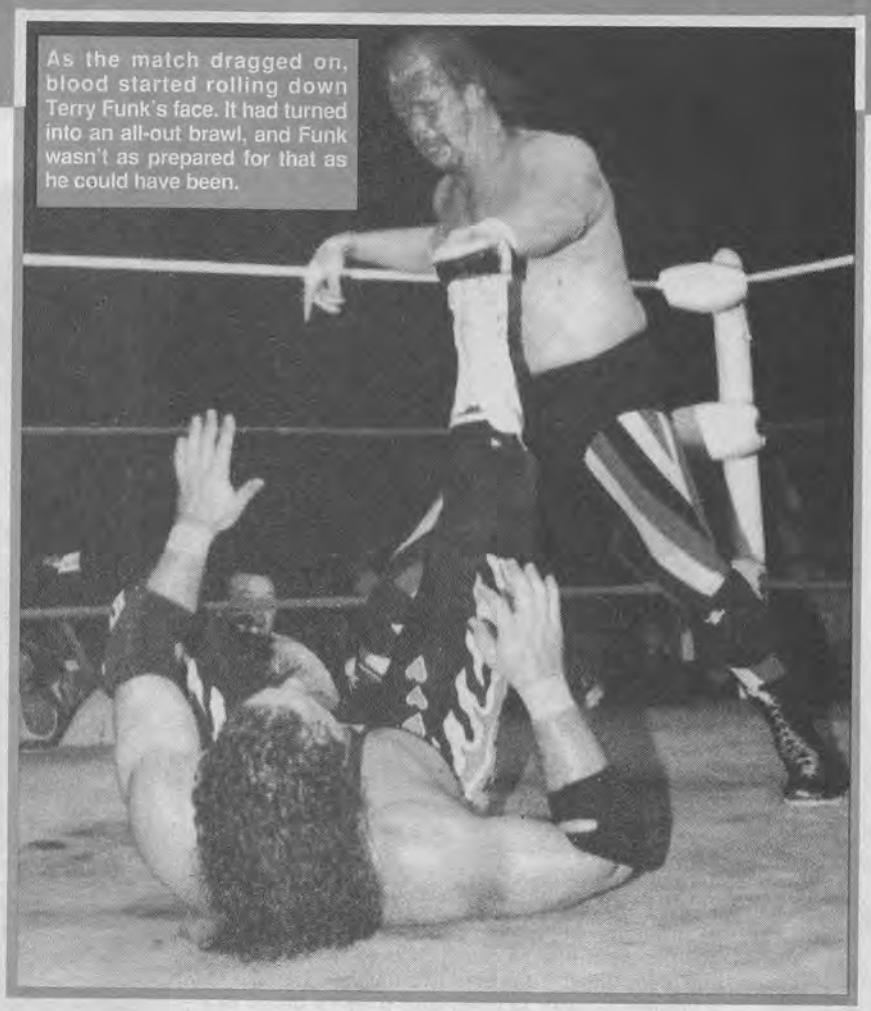
was deemed a title match by WWF officials.

"I was told from the start that this was for the whole cotton-pickin' pile of beans," Funk lamented. "I got a message from some WWF official. I'm not sure who, but this guy said this would be a battle for the belt."

Funk, however, said that a week later he received another call from a WWF official who declared the pending match a non-title affair.

"'What is this crap?' I asked the guy," said Funk. "'We're having trouble getting Bret to commit to a title match,' the guy says. Bull! I know Bret, and I know he always puts his neck on the line."

At this stage, Funk began to question his sanity and to rethink his approach to the match. He had two matters to consider: First, the nature of the match would determine how he'd train. If it were a title match, Funk would train for a lengthy, drawn-out affair. He'd focus on finding a method to pin the champion.



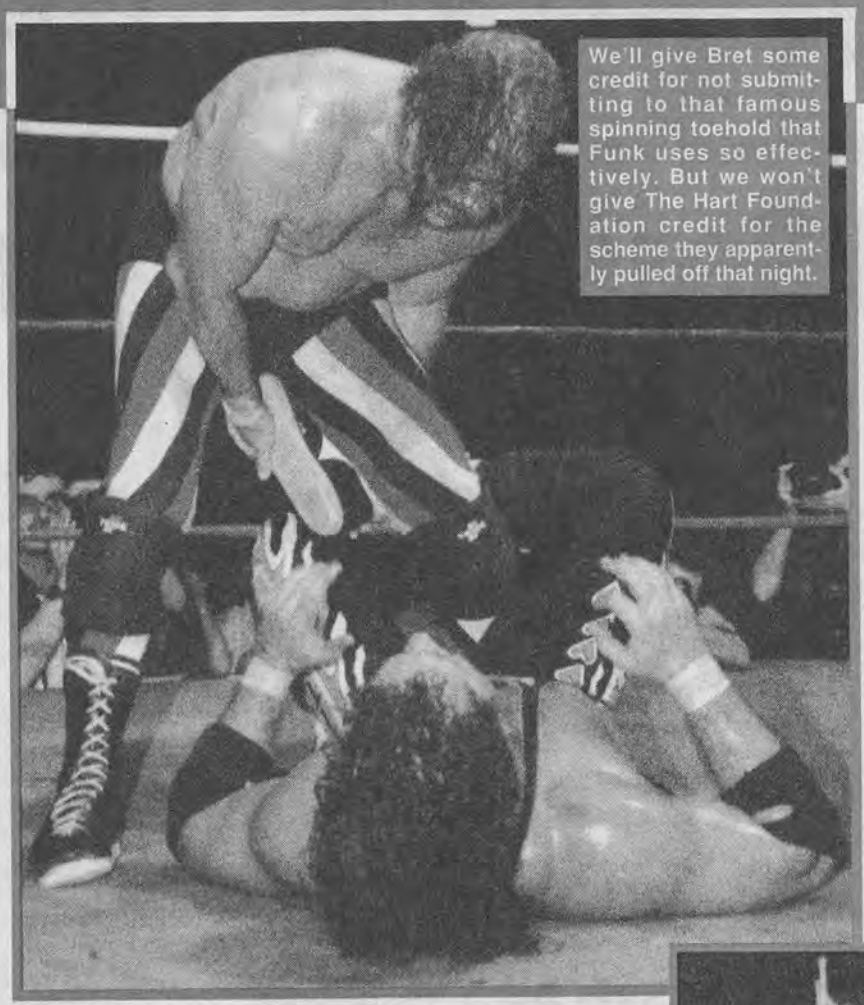
As the match dragged on, blood started rolling down Terry Funk's face. It had turned into an all-out brawl, and Funk wasn't as prepared for that as he could have been.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF FUNK

The Bret Hart-Terry Funk match was the featured bout of the WrestleFest supercard, but the entire night was dedicated to the legendary Funk family's 50 years of wrestling in Amarillo. Nearly 4,000 fans crowded the Fairgrounds Coliseum for an extraordinary night of action. The undercard saw matches featuring Dory Funk Jr. as well as top stars from Extreme Championship Wrestling and Japan. The match results are as follows:

Wing Kanemura pinned **Roadkill** after a senton off the top rope in 5:59 ... ECW TV champion **Taz** defeated **Chris Candido** by submission at 7:19 ... **Shark Tsuchiya** pinned **Cooga** after a lariat at 6:55 ... **Mark** & **Chris Youngblood** (with their father, **Ricky Romero**, in their corner) defeated The Bushwhackers in 10:20 when Mark pinned **Luke** ... **B. Mahoney** pinned **Buh Buh Ray Dudley** in 6:00 ... ECW heavyweight champion **Shane Douglas** (with **Francine**) pinned **Tommy Dreamer** (with **Beulah McGillicutty**) in 10:09 after a belly-to-belly suplex ... **Dory Funk Jr.** pinned **Rob Van Dam** in 11:32 with a three-quarter nelson and a leg grapevine ... **Mankind** defeated **Sabu** (with **Bill Alfonso**) by disqualification in 8:30 when Alfonso interfered ... **Hayabusa**, **Hakushi**, & **Masato Tanaka** defeated **Jake Roberts** & **The Headhunters** in 11:12 when Hayabusa pinned **Headhunter I**.

Hayabusa dives onto Headhunter I



We'll give Bret some credit for not submitting to that famous spinning toehold that Funk uses so effectively. But we won't give The Hart Foundation credit for the scheme they apparently pulled off that night.

If it were non-title, he would employ the scrappy, beat-the-milk-out-of-the-cow approach that earned him his reputation over the years, not having to worry about the ramifications of a disqualification.

His solution was to approach WWF Commissioner Sgt. Slaughter and demand a title bout. Slaughter's response: "Hang in there, Terry. Let me dig deeper into this matter."

On the night before the match, Funk returned to his Double-Cross Ranch and replayed the messages on his answering machine. He was surprised to hear a man's voice: "Terry, just to let you know, the match with Bret will be for the belt." Funk recognized the deep, slow voice as that of the same WWF official with whom he had already had two conversations. The voice was not Slaughter's.

So who was this mystery man?

"It took me a while to realize that this WWF official was no official," Funk added. "Best I can figure, it was a Hart Foundation guy. Maybe Jim Neidhart. Anyway, it's a member of Bret Hart's group, and that's all I need to know."

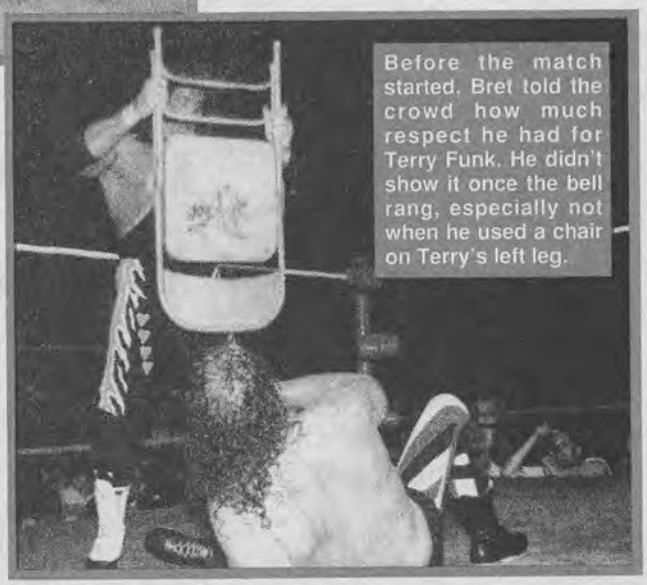
The setup climaxed when Funk arrived at the arena for the Hart match. When he pursued Commissioner Slaughter on the status of the match, Slaughter responded quizzically.

"He told me it was a non-title match. He seemed surprised I didn't know that," said Funk. "I nearly beat the crap out of him. I knew I was screwed; I trained to go the distance with Bret. My mind and body were prepared for that kind of match."

It would be presumptuous to say Terry Funk entered the ring a beaten man. Rarely has a grappler in the history of the sport shown such comeback ability. But clearly Funk was not as mentally sharp during the match as he could have been, for it was Hart who had the presence of mind to escape defeat by lifting his shoulders off the mat.

Much of this puzzling tale remains a mystery, particularly the identity of the "WWF official" who three times led Funk astray. The "Hitman" claims no knowledge of the matter, either.

"I had a job to do, and I did it," he said. "No one outthinks or outwrestles the 'Hitman.'"



Before the match started, Bret told the crowd how much respect he had for Terry Funk. He didn't show it once the bell rang, especially not when he used a chair on Terry's left leg.

In that statement may lie the answers to the questions that keep Terry Funk awake at night. Therein perhaps Funk can reconcile the fact that a friend is not always a friend. □

NO USE BEATING

The Real Reason Ric Flair

By Steve Anderson

MANY WRESTLERS HAVE TRIED TO END THE REIGN OF THE FOUR HORSEMEN, BUT IRONICALLY, IT TOOK RIC FLAIR, THE LEADER OF THE LEGENDARY QUARTET, TO GET THE JOB DONE. DID HE REALLY DO IT FOR THE GOOD OF MCMICHAEL AND BENOIT?

FOR A MAN who fought against it for so many years, "Nature Boy" Ric Flair easily embraced the end of The Four Horsemen era.

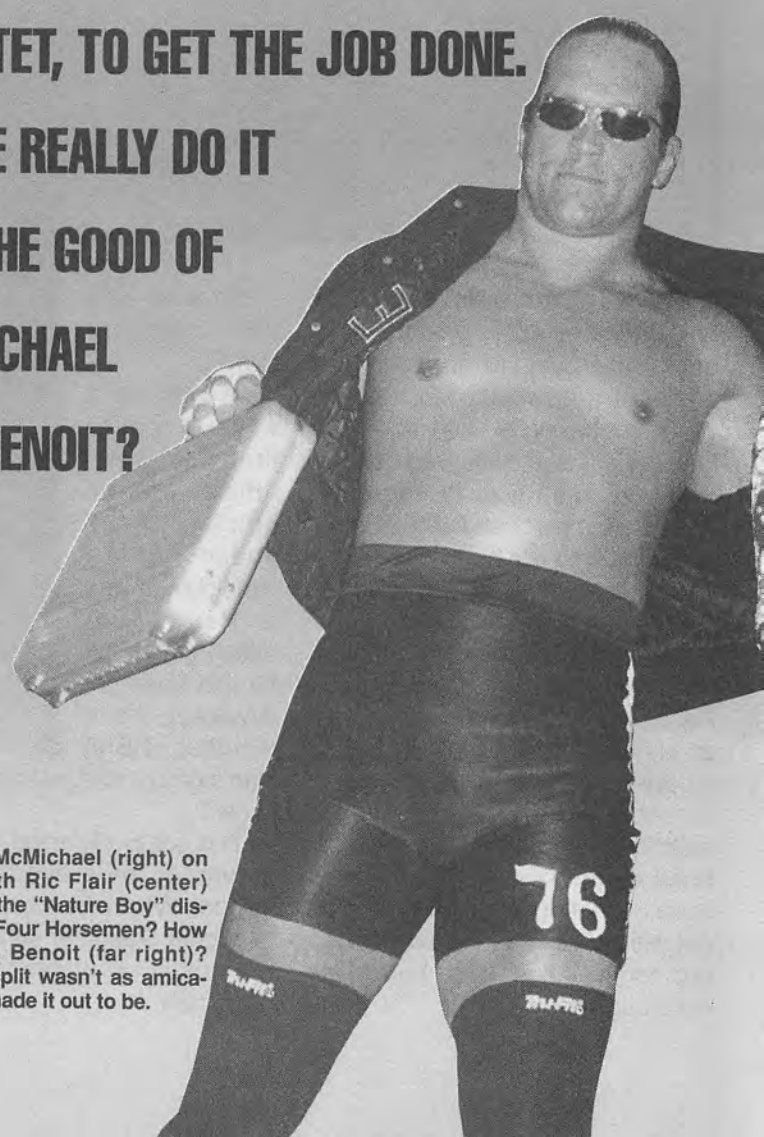
Flair's announcement on a live edition of *WCW Monday Nitro* that fellow Horsemen Chris Benoit and Steve McMichael should go their separate ways shocked the wrestling world. For the first time, Flair was making a conscious decision to disband the Horsemen. He mentioned his need to focus on his battles with Hulk Hogan and the New World Order while praising the talents of his comrades. He said it was time for him to fight on his own and for the other Horsemen to worry about their own careers.

But was there more to this story?

Absolutely, says a source close to Ric Flair. He told THE WRESTLER that Flair's intentions were not 100 percent noble. That Flair was thinking of himself and the possible future of the group that he had just eliminated when he made his final decision.

"Ric has respect for both Chris and Steve—believe me, a lot of respect," said the source. "But there have been some things going on behind the scenes that he has tried to keep hidden for the sake of unity. This breakup has been coming for months."

According to the source, early this summer, Benoit was plotting



Was Steve McMichael (right) on the outs with Ric Flair (center) even before the "Nature Boy" disbanded The Four Horsemen? How about Chris Benoit (far right)? Maybe this split wasn't as amicable as Flair made it out to be.

A DEAD HORSEMAN

Jettisoned Mongo & Benoit

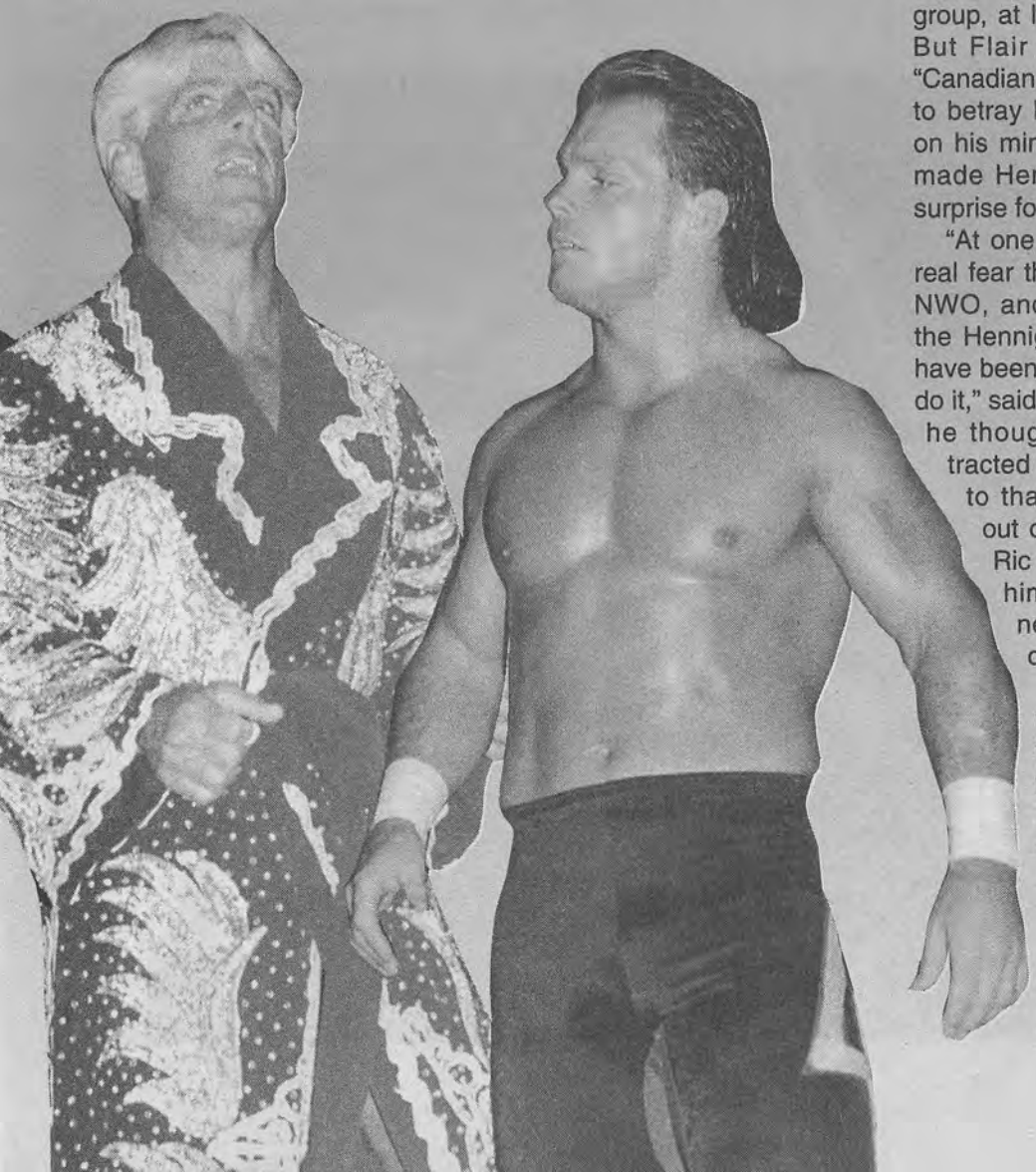
to form his own renegade Horsemen group, a clique that would have no ties to The Four Horsemen group headed by Flair. Supposedly, he was bored with his role as a supporting player and wanted to be a leader. Benoit had even gone so far as to choose two out of three men to fill out the quartet. But before the fourth could be selected and the group officially put together, Flair got wind of what was going on.

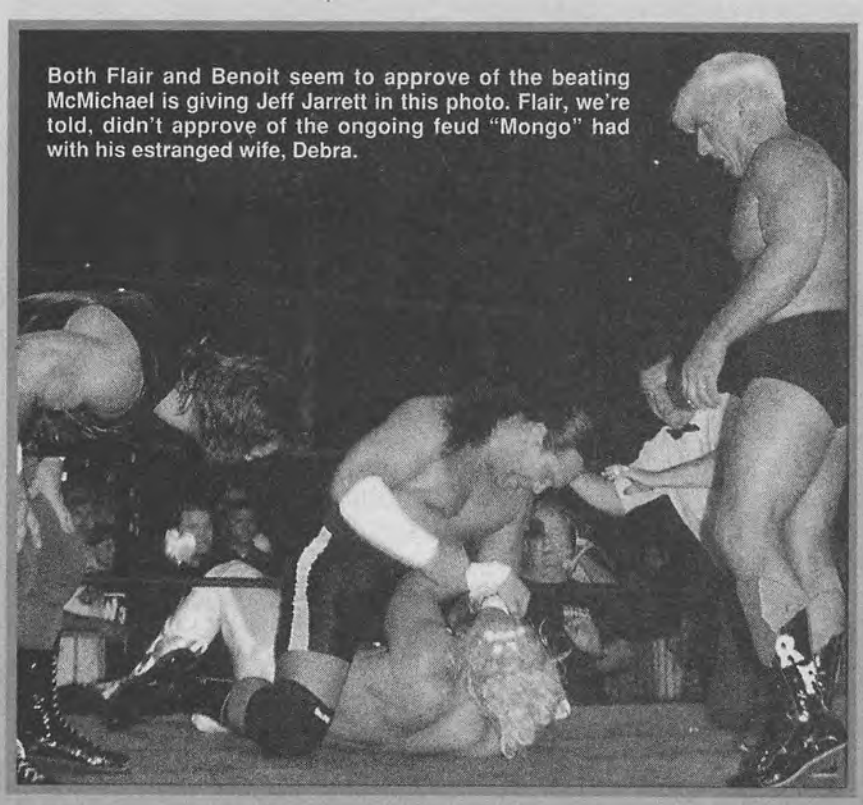
"He and Chris had a long talk about the future, and Ric said that he understood Benoit's feelings," said our source. "Ric told him that he was the future of the Horsemen. Long after he and Arn Anderson would be gone, Ric said, Benoit would be the number-one guy. That seemed to appease Benoit and make things better, but the whole deal got Ric thinking a lot."

Benoit decided at that point to stay with the Horsemen and abandon the idea of forming his own group, at least for the time being. But Flair never forgot that the "Canadian Crippler" was planning to betray him. It weighed heavily on his mind. Perhaps that's what made Hennig's betrayal such a surprise for the "Nature Boy."

"At one point, Ric expressed a real fear that Benoit just might go NWO, and 'War Games,' where the Hennig thing happened, may have been the place that he would do it," said the source. "He told me he thought Chris seemed distracted in the days leading up to that big pay-per-view, so out of the corner of his eye, Ric was keeping an eye on him. Because of that, he never saw Hennig's turn coming."

McMichael's situation was far different. He won the WCW U.S. title from Jeff Jarrett only a year after his pro debut and seemed to improve with every passing match. But according to the source, Flair was growing weary of the domestic dispute between "Mongo" and his



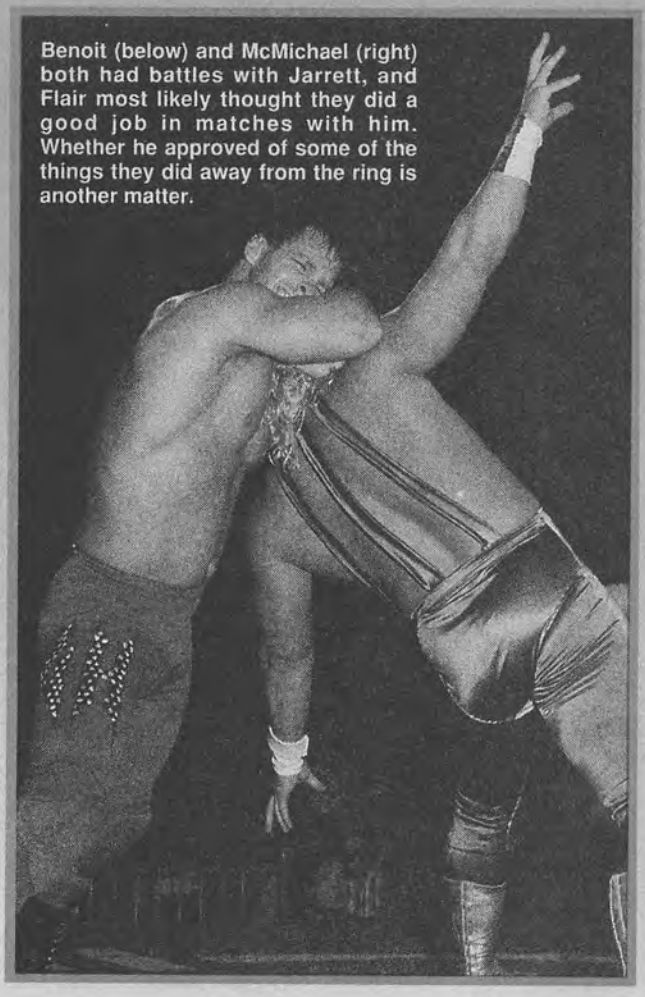


Both Flair and Benoit seem to approve of the beating McMichael is giving Jeff Jarrett in this photo. Flair, we're told, didn't approve of the ongoing feud "Mongo" had with his estranged wife, Debra.

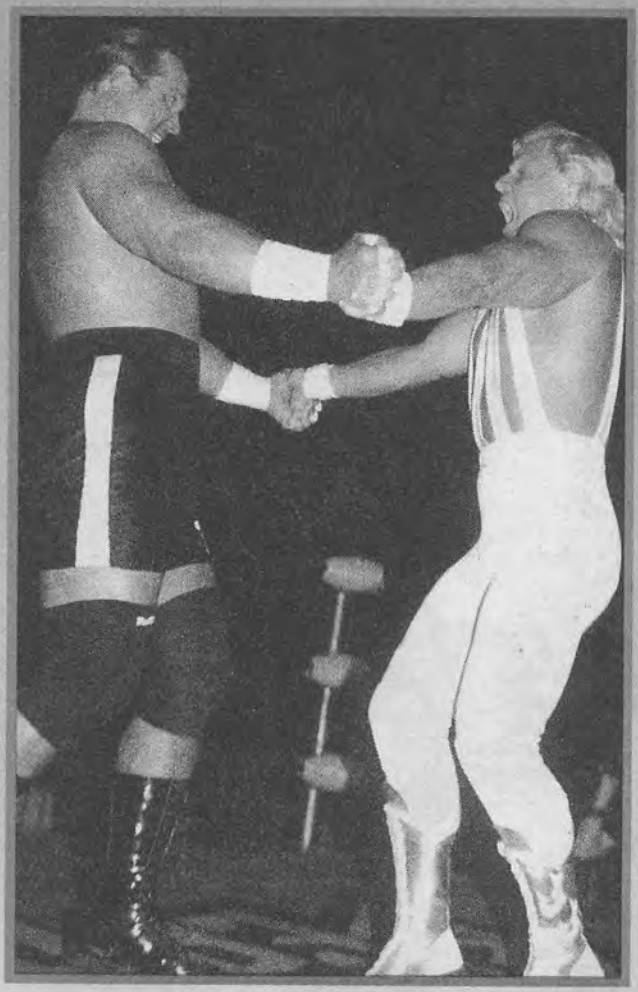
estranged wife, Debra, which was being played out on national television week after week. It was a distraction that the Horsemen could ill afford.

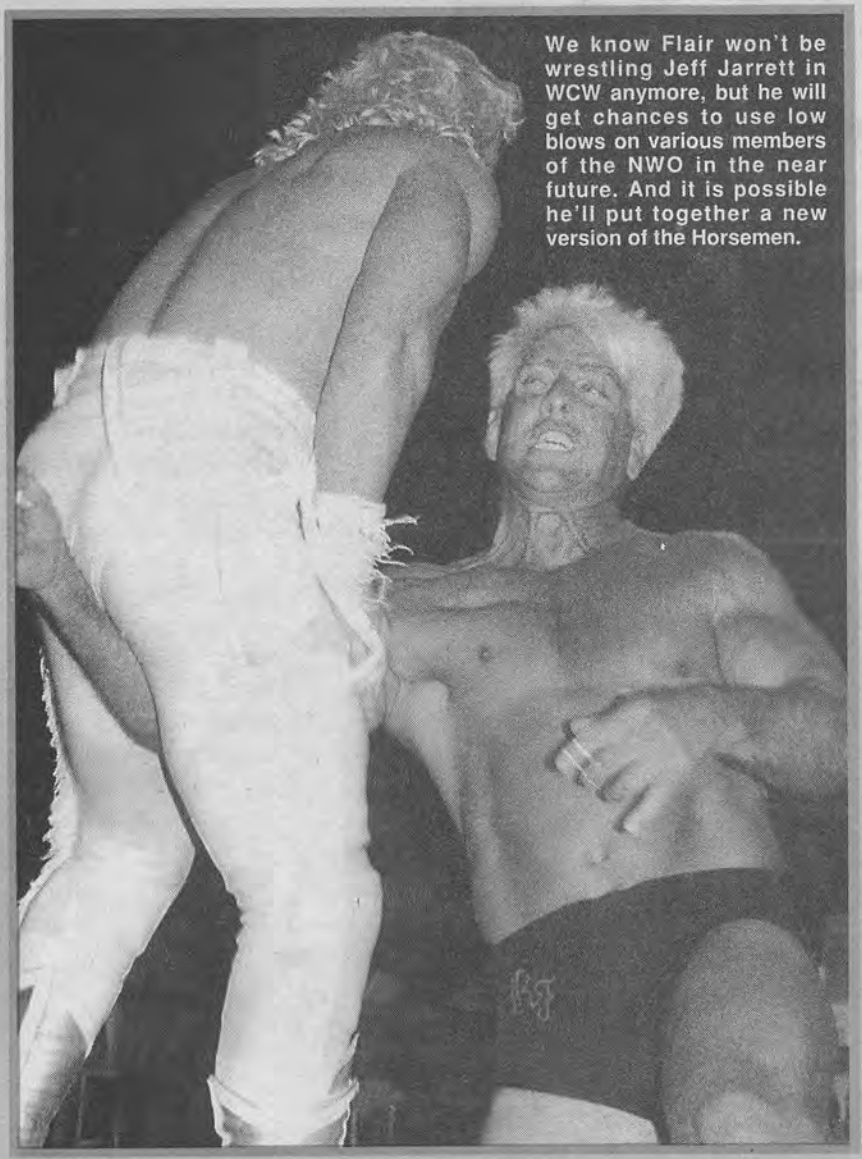
"When Woman left, Ric vowed that females would no longer play a part in weakening the Horsemen," said the source. "But Steve was always distracted by Debra. He wouldn't let it go. Ric pointed this out to Steve many times, but nothing changed. It was a distraction that Ric believed cost him the U.S. title. He feels that all the potential in the world won't hold up against a lack of maturity in the ring."

Flair was torn. While devoted to the Horsemen, he felt that the current components just weren't a good fit. When Arn told him his career was over, Flair was on the verge of disbanding the group, but



Benoit (below) and McMichael (right) both had battles with Jarrett, and Flair most likely thought they did a good job in matches with him. Whether he approved of some of the things they did away from the ring is another matter.





We know Flair won't be wrestling Jeff Jarrett in WCW anymore, but he will get chances to use low blows on various members of the NWO in the near future. And it is possible he'll put together a new version of the Horsemen.

the acquisition of Hennig made "The Enforcer's" departure a little easier for him to take. Flair was convinced that Hennig had the necessary loyalty and experience to return the Horsemen back to prominence.

"Hennig's betrayal woke Ric up," said the source. "It forced him to re-evaluate his dedication to wrestling and the Horsemen. While the attack was disheartening to Ric, it gave him the opening he was probably subconsciously looking for."

Days after the attack, Flair was on the telephone to Anderson for hours. He had read Arn's comments in *PWI Weekly* about the Horsemen being "dead" without Anderson and Flair. The "Nature Boy" started to wonder if he was right. They talked about the glory days of the Horsemen and what made them strong. By the time the conversation had ended, Flair knew what he had to do.

"Arn didn't necessarily give him his blessing to continue with the Horsemen," said the source. "But he didn't discourage him, either. Arn reminded Ric that with Benoit and McMichael and all the baggage that accompanied them, the Horsemen might be significantly weakened."

Flair has often said that it has been a pleasure to be associated with Steve McMichael. Well, he's not associated with him anymore, and he seems happy about it.

After that conversation, Flair realized two things. First, that he must fight the NWO on his own, without distraction. That way he wouldn't have to worry about who he could and couldn't trust. Second, if the Horsemen were to live on, he would have to start over and rebuild the group from the foundation—that foundation being Ric Flair.

So are the Horsemen really history? Only Flair knows for sure. □

1 GANGSTA + 1 ELIMINATOR = 2 MUCH FOR THE DUDLEYS!

When John Kronus and New Jack finally put aside their bloody legacy of hatred for each other, they couldn't decide which was better: winning the ECW tag team title, or humiliating the Dudleys!

By Craig Peters

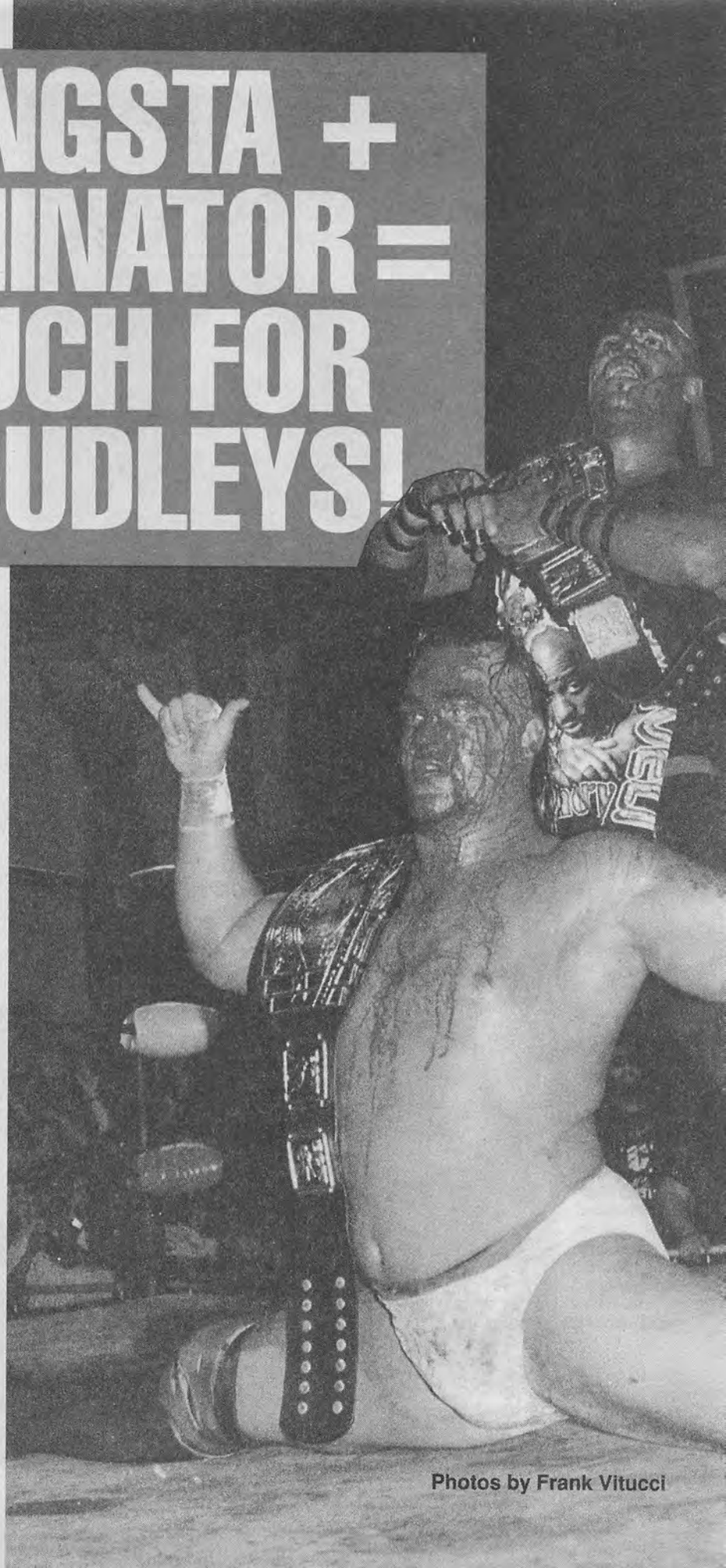
YOU MIGHT THINK that the dressing rooms of ECW are a particularly violent place.

Hardly.

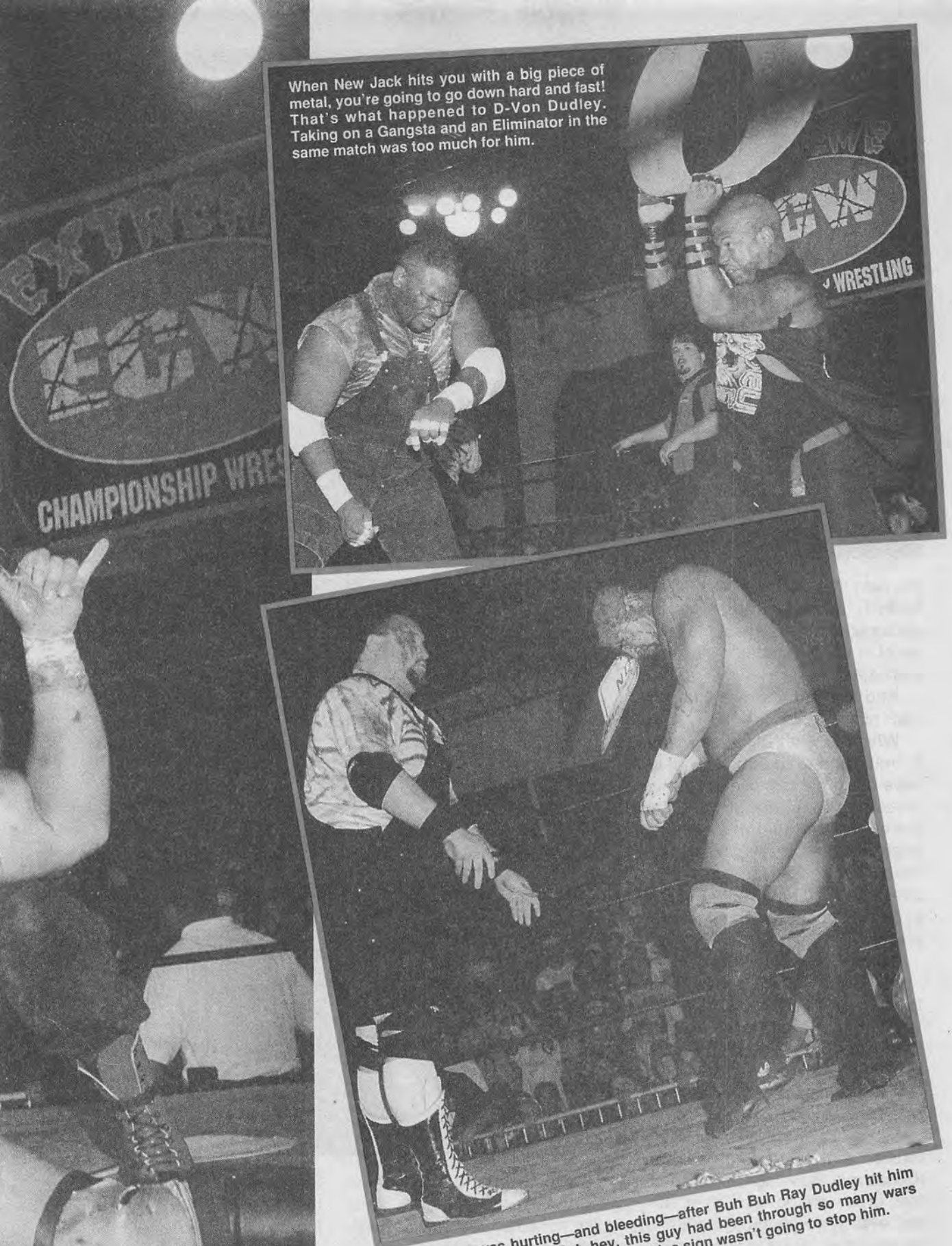
True, tempers flare up from time to time, and the occasional blood spatter adorns ECW's dressing room walls. But "violent" is not quite the word to describe ECW beyond the squared circle.

Try "moody." Or "tense."

In these quiet spaces, wrestlers tend to sit quietly on steel chairs that are uncomfortable reminders of the brutality that is to come (or that has just taken place) inside the ring. In their solitude, they wallow in their hatred for their opponents, consider



Photos by Frank Vitucci



When New Jack hits you with a big piece of metal, you're going to go down hard and fast! That's what happened to D-Von Dudley. Taking on a Gangsta and an Eliminator in the same match was too much for him.

John Kronus was hurting—and bleeding—after Buh Buh Ray Dudley hit him with a No Parking sign. But, hey, this guy had been through so many wars with The Gangstas. Taking one shot with a sign wasn't going to stop him.

New Jack was having the time of his life when he smashed Buh Buh Ray with some metal (below) and when he hammered "Big" Dick Dudley with a guitar (bottom). He never thought he'd team with Kronus, let alone win a title with him.

the pain they have inflicted (or absorbed), and sink deeper into the personal hells that enable them to excel in a violent sport's most violent organization.

And sometimes they glare at each other.

Which is what Eliminator John Kronus and Gangsta New Jack were doing not too long ago in the dressing room area of the ECW Arena in Philadelphia. Silent, intense stares that spoke louder than Joey Styles has *ever* screamed, "Ohmygod!" Locked eyes that spoke volumes in their silence:

"I'd cripple you if I could."

"You wouldn't believe how much I hated you."

"Man, the blood I shed and the scars I have 'cause of you."

"Punk."

If looks could kill, they'd both be six feet under today.

Several ECW wrestlers recall the tension that was rising between Kronus and New Jack, because as their eyes were on each other, others' eyes were on them, expecting an explosive locker room brawl to break out any second.

After what seemed an eternity, Kronus rose to his feet and started walking toward New Jack. Their gazes remained locked; the other wrestlers nearby remained ready for trouble.

Seconds later, Kronus stood before New Jack, who rose out of his chair and met the Eliminator face to face.

"We gotta talk," Kronus said.

"Good idea," New Jack responded. "Let's go."

"Over there," Kronus said, and the two men disappeared into a shadowy corner as other ECW wrestlers returned to their own business ... yet kept some antennae on alert for the first sign of trouble.

But there would be no trouble that night. Trouble came later, in full force and foursquare on the heads of two of the Dudley boys.

It was not a pretty sight.

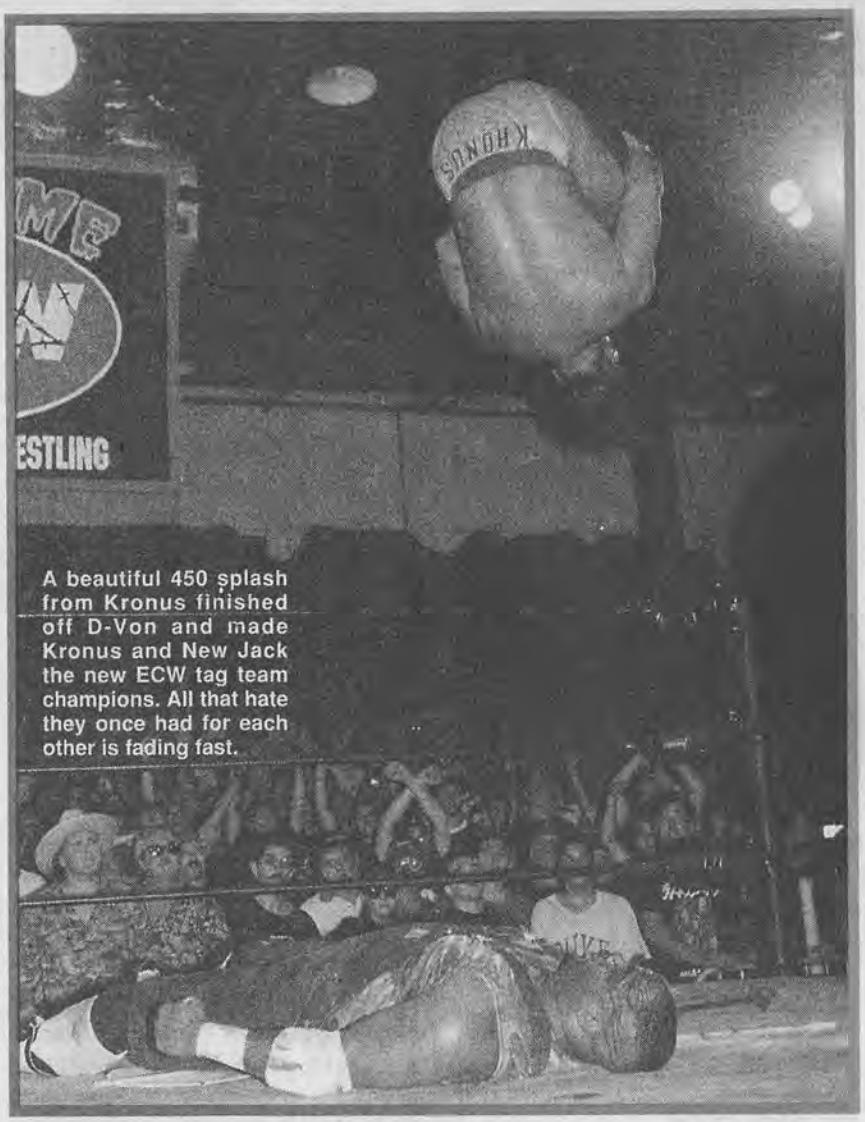
The conversation in the shadows may not have produced violence that night, but it produced one of the most remarkable tag teams ECW has ever seen, a union of two incredibly bitter enemies that resulted in a duo of destruction the likes of which makes opponents shudder in awe ... and fear.

"Ain't nothing wrong with patchin' thing up," Kronus told THE WRESTLER. "Old foes united against a common enemy. Happens all the time. You got a problem with that?"

New Jack doesn't.

"Kronus is tough, man. Got to be to survive in ECW, and he's a survivor. Lived through a feud with The Gangstas. I like his style. I like it a lot. I'm a survivor, too."

And when these determined warriors joined forces, the first thing that *didn't* survive was the Dudleys' second ECW tag team title reign.



A beautiful 450 splash from Kronus finished off D-Von and made Kronus and New Jack the new ECW tag team champions. All that hate they once had for each other is fading fast.

The carnage took place, as it so often does, at the ECW Arena in Philadelphia. Buh Buh Ray and D-Von Dudley were defending the belts that night, but even the presence at ringside of "Big" Dick Dudley, Sign Guy Dudley, and Joel "I'm The Ultimate Studmuffin" Gertner couldn't defuse Kronus and New Jack.

Especially when the Eliminator and the Gangsta stormed the ring bearing a trash can filled with weapons!

A crutch and a metal cookie sheet were the first foreign objects wielded in this wild brawl, and it was Kronus who first came up bloody. New Jack and D-Von were brawling through the crowd, and before long all four men were causing the fans to scatter for safety. (After all, nobody wants to get hit with a No Parking sign, as Kronus was at the hands of Buh Buh Ray!)

The intensity of the match was demonstrated when New Jack climbed to the balcony of the ECW Arena and dove onto D-Von, who was sprawled on a wooden table!

In the ring, Buh Buh bulldogged Kronus, but a bloodied New Jack broke up the three-count. As D-Von staggered back into the ring, "Big" Dick climbed onto the ring apron—only to be met full-force by a guitar-wielding New Jack! Seconds later, amidst the carnage, Kronus connected with a 450 splash on D-Von to score the three-count and the tag team title!

In the dressing room after the match, the Dudleys—usually boisterous in their mutual back-slapping and celebration—were ... well, moody.

And tense.

And they stared at each other with looks that, if they could, would kill.

And the other wrestlers on hand remember the evening, because not only was it a title change, it was a night when it seemed as if the Dudleys would turn against each other.

Intense, hate-filled glares on faces that were silent, bearing expressions that spoke volumes:

"D-Von ... D stands for what, demented? Deficient?"

"Buh Buh, man, *such* a bubba!"

"You! ... you!"

Among the Dudleys, the tension is only beginning to rise. □

Did you ever wonder how YOU could get into Pro Wrestling?

Maybe as a valet, manager or even a wrestler?
Or in one of **MANY** non-wrestling positions?

OR DO YOU WANT TO FIND OUT "MORE" ABOUT WRESTLING?

Now YOU can find out what you need to know to enter the exciting world of Pro Wrestling! This very insightful book is written by two active professionals in the wrestling business, who between them have worked for every major wrestling association including WCW and the WWF! You are advised what to do, where to write, how to act, how to get various jobs, what your chances are – and how to better those odds! Explains many "inside" things you never knew, but need to know!
• Details over 50 different jobs possible in pro wrestling!
• Lists addresses of U.S. promotions and best wrestling schools • Tells you where to order boots, tights, etc., in U.S. and U.K. • Charge it!

New Chapter all about the NWO!

Inside Secrets on How YOU Can Enter The Exciting World of Pro Wrestling!

Price of book is only $15, including postage!
Add $5 s/h outside U.S. - **Send Visa, MasterCard, Money Order or cash for quickest shipment!**

PRO WRESTLING CAREER BOOK
2480-4 Briarcliff Rd, Ste. 256 • Atlanta, GA 30329

MOVING?

Kindly give us 8 weeks advance notice

Are you moving? If so, please give us 8 weeks advance notice so we can continue to service your subscription promptly. Check the magazine(s) listed below you subscribe to:

- ☐ PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
- ☐ THE WRESTLER
- ☐ INSIDE WRESTLING
- ☐ WRESTLING SUPERSTARS/WRESTLE AMERICA
- ☐ PWI WEEKLY

NAME
OLD ADDRESS
CITY
STATE ZIP
NEW ADDRESS
CITY
STATE ZIP
EFFECTIVE DATE

CLIP THIS FORM AND SEND TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

4495/03-97

YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)

cool to do such things. While it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to monitor what his or her child watches, it's high time federation officials put a stop to this behavior.

DAVID MILLER
Oaktown, IN

PERCY BEARER?

I always thought Paul Bearer looked familiar to me, but I never could really place where I knew him from. I had watched World Class as a child, but never in my life did I think that the blond-haired loudmouth who tortured the Von Erichs is the same screechy-voiced morbid guy in the WWF. Now that I look at Bearer, I see that it definitely is Percy, but I can't understand why I never figured that out on my own. Seeing that photo of him leading The Missing Link ("So, Bearer, You Wanna Reveal Secrets ... These Photos Will Shock And Amaze You!" December 1997) just shows younger fans that Kane, Mankind, and The Undertaker aren't the only freaks he managed during his illustrious career. Thanks for jogging my memory!

PETER SMITH
Branson, MO

SELLING HIMSELF SHORT

I disagree with most fans' perception that Stevie Richards sold out by going to WCW ("No Holds Barred," December 1997). I think that's nothing compared to going back to Raven. Just a few months before they both ended up in WCW, Stevie finally escaped Raven's shadow and came into his own in ECW. He was instrumental in forming the Blue World Order and showed that he has potential to be a good leader instead of just a follower. A neck injury stopped him as he was gearing for a run at ECW's singles titles. Stevie told ECW fans he was just taking a few weeks off to heal his neck, but instead he showed up in WCW next to Raven, back in the same passive position he had just gotten himself out of. I can't understand how Stevie could just rejoin Raven after all the abuse he took from him. It just makes no sense to me. I think he's just a future star selling himself short too early in his career.

HAROLD PAWLIK
Erie, PA

Stevie Richards is back where he started a few years ago in ECW—at the side of Raven. Reader Harold Pawlik believes it was a bad career move for him.

Bret Hart proudly waves the Canadian flag before one of his matches. Reader Donna Rooker was disturbed by the treatment her family got from fellow WWF fans while cheering on The Hart Foundation.

MAYBE HE'S RIGHT

I totally agree with Bret Hart's assessment of American fans when he says that they are all rude and obnoxious. After seeing the way my family was treated at a recent WWF card in Philadelphia, I am ashamed to be lumped in with other Americans, but not ashamed to be known as a Hart Foundation fan.

While at a WWF show at the CoreStates Center, my family and I had things thrown at us for cheering Bret Hart. This is not right. Whatever happened to respect of any kind? I thought the United States was supposed to be a free country in which fans could cheer for the people they liked. I think the WWF or the arena security should stop incidents like this from happening, because throwing things at other fans and fighting in the seats is uncalled for. If this rude behavior continues, some fan might get hurt.

DONNA ROOKER
Lansdale, PA □

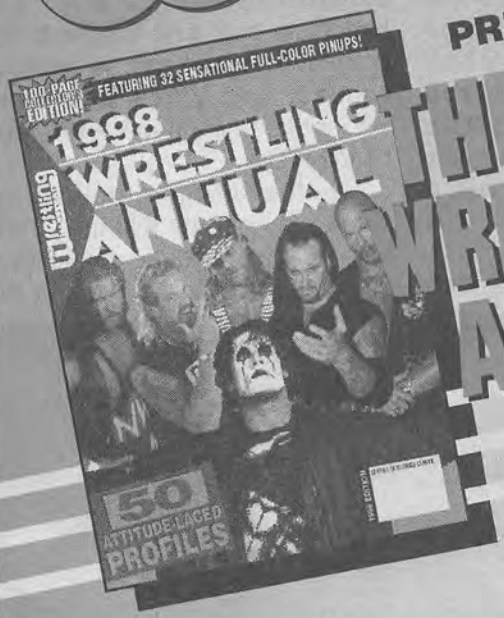
Send YOUR LETTERS to:
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

ON SALE DECEMBER 9

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

PRESENTS...

THE 1998 WRESTLING ANNUAL



This senses-shattering spectacular special issue is 100 pages of wrestling action you can't miss! We profile 50 of the biggest stars in the sport today—and look ahead to their prospects for survival in 1998!
PLUS: We've packed the issue with 32 full-color pinups that are collector's items in themselves!

Last year's Annual was nearly a newsstand sellout.
To ensure that you get yours, use the handy form below to order by mail.

Please send me ____ copies of the 1998 WRESTLING ANNUAL. I am enclosing $____
($7 per copy, postage and handling included) as payment in full.
Please send check or money order only to:
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Print your name and address clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

For all orders outside the U.S. and Canada, you must add $1 for every copy to be delivered by surface mail or $2 for every copy to be delivered by airmail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

4588/10-97

WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 7)

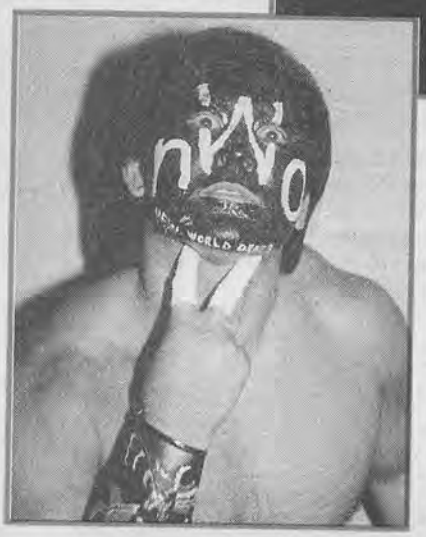
front of such a big national audience" ... **Steve Corino** captured the NWA 2000 American Heritage title by beating **Eddie Brown** in a tournament final ... **Black Eagle** has won the Northern Championship Wrestling TV title from **Frankie the Mobster** ... **"Mr. Intensity" Eric Sbraccia** has joined **Tony Rumble's Brotherhood** in New England's Century Wrestling Alliance.

Masa Chono and **Keiji Muto** have made the NWO's Japanese contingent very happy. They beat **Kensuke Sasaki** and **Kazuo Yamazaki** for the IWGP tag team belts. Whereas at first Muto was unsure if joining the NWO was a smart move, he now says, "It is the best career move I ever made. But these IWGP belts mean nothing to us. Perhaps an engraver can delete the shameful IWGP name from them and put the NWO logo on them so that the belts will mean something again!"

Meanwhile, Chono tells me that several other New Japan wrestlers—men such as **Tarzan Goto** and **Michiyoshi Ohara**—have approached him about joining the NWO. "They must prove themselves by turning against all their friends in New Japan before we will even consider them," Chono said ... **Pablo Marquez**, who has competed in ECW and various East Coast independents, has signed with Mexico's Promo Azteca.

What a shock it was to see **Jeff Jarrett** return to the WWF and badmouth both **Eric Bischoff**, the man who signed him to a WCW contract, and **Vince McMahon**, who rehired him in the WWF after he left WCW.

"Neither of them helped my career one bit," he told me. "They both tried to make me something I am not. Now that I'm back in the WWF, I'll guide my own career. McMahon needs me more than I need him. If he doesn't like what I do, let him fire me!" ... Veteran wrestler **Manny Fernandez** is now a high school wrestling coach in Concord, North Carolina. Manny also wrestles on independent cards on the weekends ... **"Road Dog" Jesse James** and **Billy Gunn** have formed a new tag team and are feuding with **The Headbangers**.



Keiji Muto (left) and Masa Chono (above) have won the IWGP tag team title for the NWO, but they're not as thrilled with the win as you might expect.

Bill Goldberg is already showing that he has the potential to be a superstar in WCW. His next order of business in that promotion: Wrestle Steve McMichael.

Finally, though I rarely try to predict which rookie wrestlers have the potential to become superstars fast, I will say that I am convinced **Bill Goldberg** has a very bright future in WCW. Goldberg, who was trained at the federation's Power Plant, is already growing tired of hearing that he resembles **"Stone-Cold" Steve Austin**.

"Everybody thinks I should be flattered by the comparison, but I'm not," he said. "I'm simply me. I am the toughest man in the world, and so far, not one of my opponents has lasted more than five minutes with me. **Steve McMichael** is trying to push my buttons by gettin' in my face. All I can say is get me a contract with the guy and we'll see if he even makes it past the three-minute mark."

That's what's happening. I'll see you at the matches! □

THIS Month In...

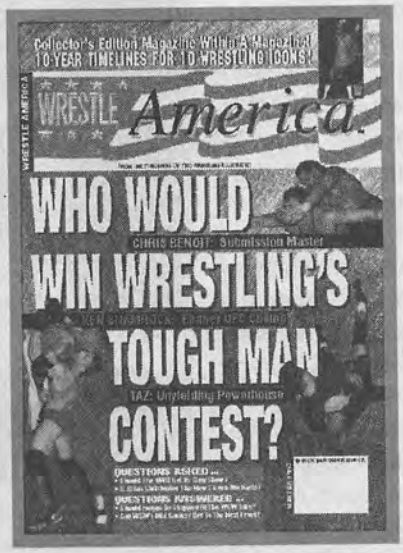
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

We've waited and waited and waited some more for **STING** vs. **HULK HOGAN**, and we're finally going to get it at Starrcade. You'll be ready for this showdown after reading through our 17 pages of prematch coverage. We'll give you an exclusive preview and analysis, **LEX LUGER** on Sting's strategy, **RANDY SAVAGE** on Hogan's strategy, tales of the tape and complete pay-per-view records on both men, a full-color fight poster, and more! … Don't miss part two of our series on **PERRY SATURN'S** recovery from knee surgery. His doctor called it "miraculous."

All this—and much more!—in the February 1998 issue of ***Pro Wrestling Illustrated***

NOW ON SALE!

WRESTLE America



Who would wrestling's tough man contest? We'll tell who might have the edge in several key categories and then pick a winner. Would it be **CHRIS BENOIT**, **DAN SEVERN**, **KEN SHAMROCK**, **TAZ**, or someone else? … Don't miss our magazine within a magazine featuring a decade worth of highs and lows for 10 wrestling icons! … We were all shocked by what **CURT HENNIG** did to **RIC FLAIR** at Fall Brawl. Now he will tell you exactly how he led the "Nature Boy" into his trap … Could **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER** possibly be right when he says, "I'm **SHAWN MICHAELS**—only better!"

All this—and much more!—in the Winter 1997 issue of ***Wrestle America***

NOW ON SALE!

NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

strength of character and perseverance.

Obstacle number two involved his football career. After receiving a football scholarship to Miami of Ohio and becoming an all-American, Brian was ready to enter the pros. But experts told the smallish athlete that he would not cut it in the big leagues. He was passed over in the NFL draft. Those experts didn't know what they were up against.

Brian made the Cincinnati Bengals' roster as a walk-on, and after the season received the prestigious Ed Block Courage Award. He would go on to success in the Canadian Football League, too. But injuries would end his football career and present another obstacle.

Brian Pillman chokes Shane Douglas with his foot during a match in 1993. Pillman spent several years in WCW, but this was about as vicious and deranged as he got. He was determined to become a star using his skills which he honed while training with the Hart family.

Obstacle number three involved his wrestling career. Professional wrestling in the mid-'80s revolved around the super heavyweights. The big men ruled the ring. A light heavyweight like Pillman surely wouldn't endure, let alone shine in a major promotion. But the training of Stu Hart and his sons paid immediate dividends and Pillman shined in Stampede Wrestling in Calgary. He formed a successful tag team with Bruce Hart, and the duo known as Bad Company captured the Stampede International tag team title twice in 1987.

In 1989, WCW came calling. And with that call came even more obstacles.

Pillman answered the challenge with victories for the now-defunct light heavyweight belt, the U.S. tag team title (with Tom Zenk), and the World tag team championship (with Steve Austin). Injuries sidelined Pillman numerous times during his career, but he always returned. But an injury suffered outside the ring provided Pillman with an overwhelming obstacle.

Pillman's career and life hung in the balance after his Humvee rolled over in Kentucky in April 1996. His ankle was practically destroyed. But after surgery and rehabilitation, Pillman returned to the ring in May 1997 with the WWF. But he was often in a great deal of pain.

But the pain was just another obstacle, and having already gone through so much to get to where he was, he wasn't going to let it stop him. He knew his ankle wasn't strong enough to allow to him to use the high-risk aerial style that earned him the nickname "Flyin'" Brian in WCW, so he stayed on the mat more and still won his share of matches.

Then, on a cool, quiet Saturday night at the Budgetel Inn in Bloomington, Minnesota, Brian Pillman called home to Kentucky and left a message on the answering machine, letting Melanie know he was going to bed. He went to sleep and never woke up. Wrestling was left without a star. But more importantly, a wife and children (Melanie had learned she was pregnant with Brian's sixth child just days before his death and never got to tell him) were left without the most important person in their lives.

Wrestling will continue without Brian Pillman. The fans will continue without Brian Pillman. The wrestlers will continue to compete without Brian Pillman. But Melanie and her children will live each day missing something, wondering exactly what happened and why. Wondering what his final thoughts were.

This column is dedicated not only to the memory of Brian Pillman, but to his survivors. Melanie, his widow, has displayed a great deal of strength and quiet dignity. His children will always have a tremendous void in their lives. Let us hope that their obstacles are fewer and less challenging than the ones their father encountered. For that's what Brian Pillman's life was about.

Obstacles. □

COMING DECEMBER 30

THE BIG ONE

The Spectacular Year-End Double Issue Of

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

THE MOST CELEBRATED MAGAZINE EVENT OF THE YEAR!

- **100 power-packed pages bursting with color**
- **Achievement '97 award winners in 11 important categories!**
- **Your own "Unofficial/Official Awards" for 1997**
- **The wild and wacky "1997: The Year In Review"**
- **An extensive collection of "PWI SuperStats"**
- **Special year-end columns and features**

The incredible 100-page super-spectacular year-end collector's edition of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* is cover-dated March 1998 and goes on sale December 30, 1997. It's sure to be a newsstand sellout, so get yours early!

4584/10-97

CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

of the ring and onto a surprised camera man.

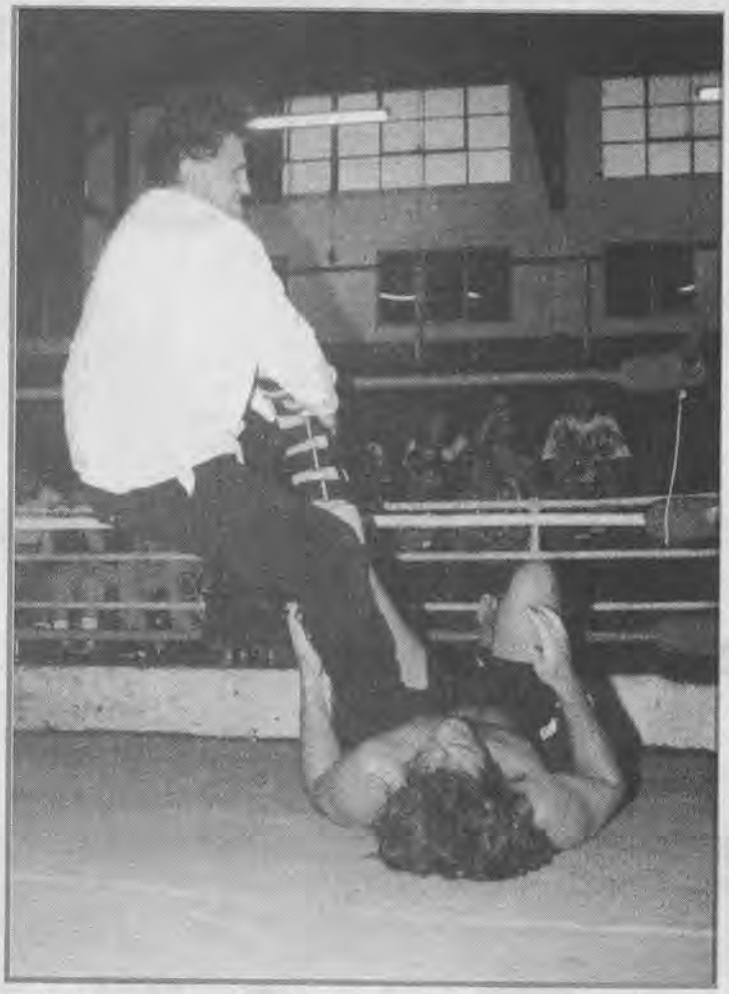
As WWF Commissioner Sgt. Slaughter entered the cage to help the camera man, Michaels hit The Undertaker with a superkick, but 'Taker just shook it off. Stunned, Shawn sprinted out the cage door, but 'Taker followed him.

Once outside, Undertaker rammed Shawn into the cage, opening a huge gash on his head. Michaels then climbed the cage to get away, but the man from the dark side followed and backdropped him on the roof of the cage.

Shawn was the first to try to climb back down, but 'Taker knocked him off the cage and through a ringside press table. After press-slamming Shawn's limp body, he threw him back into the cage to finish him off.

Back inside, 'Taker choke-slammed Shawn from the top rope and nailed him with a chair, but then the lights went out and Kane and Paul Bearer came to ringside. After ripping the cage door off its hinges, Kane "tombstone" pile-drived 'Taker, who was then pinned by a groggy Michaels.

In other bouts: D-Lo Brown, Rocky Maivia, & Kama Mustafa defeated The Road Warriors in a handicap match ... Mini Max & Nova beat Mosaic & Tarantula ... Henry & Phineas Godwinn defeated WWF World tag team champions The Headbangers to win the title ... Owen Hart pinned Faarooq in a tournament final to win the vacant Intercontinental title after Steve Austin interfered ... Chainz & Eight-Ball defeated Savio Vega & Miguel Perez Jr. ... Bret Hart & Davey Boy Smith beat Big Van Vader & The Patriot in a flag-on-a-pole match.



Slicky Boy applies a leglock on the broken left leg of MECW champ John Rambo. Rambo somehow managed to win the match despite his injury. He finished off Slicky with a savate kick (with his right leg).

Winchester, VA ***(Correspondent—Timothy A. Walker):*** Mid-Eastern Championship Wrestling heavyweight champ John Rambo proved his mettle on this night as he defended his title against Slicky Boy despite suffering a broken leg earlier in the night. Rambo came to the ring on crutches with his left leg in an air cast, but he insisted on honoring his contract.

As expected, Slicky Boy went right after Rambo's leg, applying a series of leglocks and a Boston crab that had Rambo howling in pain. Rambo eventually reached the ropes and forced a break, but Slicky Boy continued to concentrate his attack on Rambo's left leg. Even though he was in tremendous pain, Rambo hammered Slicky Boy with his fists.

Rambo grabbed Slicky in a tight side headlock, but Slicky freed himself and took Rambo down. His attempt to choke out the popular champion proved futile as Rambo valiantly fought back by whipping Slicky Boy into the ropes and connecting with a one-legged dropkick to the face. As both men struggled to get back to their feet, Rambo balanced himself on his bad leg and hit a stunned Slicky Boy with a savate kick. Though hurt and exhausted, Rambo collapsed on top of Slicky, and the referee made the three-count.

In other matches: Morgus the Maniac won a battle royal ... Morgus the Maniac defeated Julio Sanchez by disqualification ... The Grungers defeated R.C. & R.G. Luv'n ... Blackhawk beat Jack Hammer by reverse decision ... Big E. Sleaze pinned Fumar ... Prof. Egon Ecton pinned Kurt Keizer. □

Send your reports to:
CORRESPONDENTS EDITOR,
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

YOU ASKED US

(Continued from page 16)

Q: "I'd like to ask Kimberly Page a question: I think it's smart that you don't accompany your husband to the ring anymore, what with the NWO always looking to hurt you and Dallas, but do you ever worry about getting attacked while you're dancing with the other *Nitro* girls?" —Susan Harlan, Grand Rapids, MI

A: "I've given that a lot of thought," said Kimberly. "A lot of times we dance right in front of the ramp leading to the ring, right by the entrance to the dressing rooms, so it could be dangerous for me. Plus when you're dancing, you can't really watch what's going on around you. But Dallas is always watching out for me when I'm out there. You may not see him, but he's never far away from me, so if one of those NWO cowards got by the security they set up for us and got too close, he'd be there ready to pounce on him. I've learned the hard way to be prepared for anything when the NWO is around, but I do think I'm quite safe when I'm dancing."

Scott Steiner pounds Ric Flair during a match they had in 1991. Scott says he has no plans to pursue singles title; he's busy enough with tag team matches.

• • •

Q: "I'd like to ask Scott Steiner a question. Scott, first off, let me congratulate you on winning the WCW World tag team title with your brother, Rick, again. Have you considered challenging for the World heavyweight title recently?" —Bobby Hyland, Cleveland, OH

A: "A few years ago, you might remember, I took Ric Flair to the limit, and I beat Rick Steamboat for the TV title in 1992. But that was then, and the Steiner brothers are now," Scott said. "I have no strong interest in singles titles at this time. Sure, I'd like to beat Hulk Hogan or Sting or The Giant. But I'd rather beat Harlem Heat, Hall and Nash, and Public Enemy. No one asks Michael Jordan why he doesn't go back to baseball. That's because he's a basketball player, first and foremost. I'm a tag team wrestler, and I'm happy doing it. I take singles matches here and there, but I believe my brother and I are the greatest tag team ever. A lot of people I talk to tell me that, too. We want to keep building on that reputation we have for as long as possible."

• • •

Q: "I've got a question for former USWA Southern champion The Spellbinder. With your size and strength, why aren't you competing in either WCW or the WWF?" —Kristy Gulick, Omaha, NB

A: "That's always a possibility," Spellbinder admitted. "I've got a number of offers from a lot of people, and I wrestled a few matches in the WWF a few years ago. It was a good experience, and I may head back in the future, but right now I'm wrestling in all different organizations and getting experience against as many different kinds of wrestlers as I can. I've wrestled down South a lot, but now I'm headed to Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling for a while. When you go to the WWF or WCW full-time, you have to be really at your best. I'm taking things kind of slow for now." □

Send your questions to:
YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER
Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

$ MAKE BIG MONEY IN PRO WRESTLING $

Whether you want to be in the wrestling spotlight or make money behind the scenes, this book was written for you!! Co-authored by wrestling superstars **KING KONG BUNDY** and **"PRETTY BOY" LARRY SHARPE, HITTIN' THE MAT** contains everything you need to know to prepare for a wrestling or non-wrestling career in this exciting business. **GUARANTEED!** Whether you want to make money in the wrestling industry or just enjoy watching, this book is a must! Act now and receive the following **FREE** bonuses:

1. Autographed, personalized picture of **KING KONG BUNDY** and **"PRETTY BOY" LARRY SHARPE.**

2. Informative guide describing dozens of non-wrestling positions.

3. Money-saving coupons for wrestling publications, training, equipment, memorabilia and more.

Only $12.95 + $2 S/H
(Add $5 outside U.S.)

DON'T WAIT! ORDER TODAY!

Send to:
HITTIN' THE MAT
704 BROADWAY, #188B
MANTUA, NJ 08051

BACK ISSUES OF THE Wrestler

Don't miss a single issue of the magazine that has thrilled wrestling fans for two generations, THE WRESTLER. Complete your collection of the most respected wrestling publication in the world today. Supplies are limited. Don't delay—order today!

November 1976: Bruno-Hansen Cage Match: Incredible Sammartino Is Victorious Again! Also: Bruiser Brody, Dory Funk Jr., Bulldog Brower, Andre-Koloff, Mr. Wrestling II, Kansas City, Strongbow & White Wolf, Angelo Mosca, Mascaras & Carpentier.

November 1977: Bruno Sammartino vs. Superstar Graham: The Slaughter Must Be Stopped ... Now! Also: Snuka-Studd, Jones-Slater, Gagne & Brunzell, Ox Baker, Mil Mascaras, Stasiak & Steele, Rick Steamboat, Dino Bravo.

December 1978: The Injury Andre The Giant Must Keep Secret. Also: Victor Rivera, Brisco-Spoiler, Heenan & Bockwinkel, Tully Blanchard, Mulligan, Dino Bravo, D. Funk-Race, Rocky Johnson.

March 1979: Backlund vs. Ladd: Did Bruno's "Interference" Cost Ladd The WWWF Title? Also: Angelo Mosca, Dick Murdoch, Peter Maivia, Bob Orton Jr., Bockwinkel-Rhodes, Brisco-Race, Crusher Blackwell, Lewin-T. Funk.

September 1980: Why Ernie Ladd Says ... "I'm Tired Of Being Your King." Also: Rick Steamboat, Mad Dog Vachon, Bugsy McGraw, Patera-Patterson, Manny Fernandez, Bob Backlund, Greg Gagne, Mike Sharpe.

October 1980: Kevin Von Erich Wins The Missouri Title From Kevin Von Erich! Also: Mr. Wrestling II, Pedro Morales, Superstar Graham, Dusty Rhodes, Idol-Race, Rick McGraw.

February 1981: Larry Zbyszko's Claim: "Tony Garea Begged Me Not To Hurt Him!" Also: The Grappler, Race-Patera, Hussein Arab, Humperdink-Rhodes, Gilberts, Mr. Wrestling II, Bravo-Bockwinkel.

January 1982: Rich vs. Masked Superstar: Can Tommy Rich Survive As Georgia's Last Hero? Also: Kiwis, Bockwinkel-Atlas, Mascaras-Steamboat, Sullivan-Taylor, Bruno Sammartino.

April 1982: How Jack Brisco Controls Ric Flair's Championship Destiny. Also: Tito Santana, Valentine-Atlas, Bob Roop, Armstrongs, John Studd, Eric Embry.

June 1982: Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat: How The NWA Belt Strangled Wrestling's Greatest Friendship. Also: Piper-Armstrong, Hussein Arab, Bruno Sammartino, Adonis & Ventura, Butch Reed.

July 1982: Harley Race—His Destiny Is In The Hands Of Tommy Rich. Also: Rick Steamboat, Chief Jay Strongbow, Buzz Sawyer, Ric Flair, Roddy Piper.

December 1982: Morales vs. Snuka: Does Pedro Deserve To Be Intercontinental Champion? Also: Bob Orton Jr., Kamala, Rich & Rhodes, Barry Windham, Ted DiBiase, JYD-Bockwinkel, Oliver Humperdink.

February 1983: Exclusive Coverage: Nick Bockwinkel Regains The AWA Title From Otto Wanz. Also: Backlund-Graham, Rich-Sawyer, Barry Windham, Martel & Garea, McDaniel & Piper, Kamala.

July 1983: Ric Flair: "I Wrestle The Men Backlund Is Afraid Of." Also: Putski-Adonis, Kevin Sullivan, Bob Roop, Martel-Heenan.

September 1983: Nick Bockwinkel Forces Hulk Hogan Into Exile: And Only The Fans Can Bring Him Back. Also: Briscos, Blackwell-Kerry-Race, Paul Ellering, Mulligan & Windham.

June 1984: David Von Erich—We'll Never Forget You. Also: Billy Jack, Flair-Race, Bockwinkel-Bravo, Brickhouse Brown.

August 1984: Garvin vs. Roberts: "Hands Of Stone" Crushes "The Snake." Also: Freebirds-Devastation Inc., Sawyer-Sullivan, Lawler & Dillon, McDaniel-Race.

September 1984: Kerry Von Erich Wins The NWA Title: For David ... For Texas ... For Wrestling! Also: Billy Jack, Bundy & Superstar-Road Warriors, Piper & Orndorff-Johnson & Atlas, Rick Martel.

November 1984: The $50,000 Full-Nelson Challenge Match: Billy Jack Gets Revenge Against Superstar Graham. Also: Piper-Hogan, Heenan & Saito, Brody & Hansen, Von Erichs.

December 1984: The Tully Blanchard-Rick Steamboat Feud: Will Dusty Rhodes End It ... Or Make It Worse? Also: Tito Santana, Martel-Atlas, D. Funk, Mike Von Erich, Williams-Taylor.

January 1985: Kerry Von Erich: "I've Got Ric Flair's NWA Title Within My Grasp." Also: Albano & Lauper, Koloffs & Kernodle, Road Warriors, Lawler & Rude, Scott McGhee.

April 1985: Six-Man Riot! Road Warriors & Ellering vs. Rhodes, Rich, & Anderson. Also: Tonga Kid, tomorrow's stars, Adams-Kevin, Flair-Jack, Terminators.

July 1985: It's A Dog's Life ... And Junkyard Dog Wouldn't Trade It With Anyone! Also: Backlund-Martel, Kernodle-Koloff, Butch Reed, Hernandez & Sunshine, Mike Graham.

October 1985: David Shultz Gets An NWA Title Shot: Ric Flair—"I Wrestle The Men Hulk Hogan Is Afraid Of!" Also: Misty Blue, Rick Martel, Kendall Windham, George Steele, Killer Brooks, wrestling greats' all-time top 10.

March 1987: Ivan & Khrushchev's Kremlin Orders: Crush Nikita Koloff's Russian Revolution! Also: Barry Windham, One Man Gang, Brian Adias, Savage-Steamboat, Jimmy Snuka.

April 1987: Hulk's Giant Tasks: Hercules, Kamala ... And Andre? Also: Luger-Allen, Rich-Lawler, Rude & Fernandez-Rock 'n' Rolls, Kevin Von Erich, Skandor Akbar.

July 1987: Missy Hyatt: Will She Kiss And Tell In The WWF? Also: Chris Adams, Hart Foundation, Luger & Horsemen, Nikita-Cornette, Stan Hansen.

September 1987: Independence Day! Also: Hennig-Bockwinkel, Hart Foundation, Koloffs, Bubba Rogers, Missy Hyatt.

December 1987: Hulk Hogan: Will He Be Drowned By The New Wave Of Challengers? Also: Hennig-Lawler, Windham-Steiner, Flair-Williams, Brutus Beefcake, Ronnie Garvin.

February 1988: Ric Flair Admits: "I'm Nothing Without The NWA Belt!" Also: Kerry Von Erich, Jim Cornette, Hogan-Andre, Hennig-Lawler, Terry Taylor.

March 1988: After Four Years As Champion ... Only Hulk Hogan Can Beat Hulk Hogan. Also: Warriors-Demolition, Steve Williams, Luger & Dillon, Calgary, Terry Gordy.

April 1988 (Special Issue): Starrcade, Survivor Series, World Class: Wrestling's Greatest Day! Also: Midnight Rockers, Luger-Horsemen, Santana & Martel, McDaniel-Hennig, Bobby Eaton.

October 1988: The Fantastics Declare: "We Will Not Share Our Fans With The Rock 'n' Roll Express!" Also: Rhodes-Windham, Curt Hennig, Roberts-Rude, Rougeaus, Jim Garvin.

January 1989: The Horsemen Destroyed! The World Title Gained! But The Midnight Express Must Still Prove Themselves! Also: Top Guns, Hart & Rougeaus, Andre-Savage-Hulk, Terry Gordy, Kevin Von Erich.

February 1989: The Road Warriors: "Sting, Dusty, & The Fans Can Go To Hell!" Also: Madusa Miceli, Blue Blazer, Warrior-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy, Eddie Gilbert.

March 1989: Scared Stiff! "Don't Say Snake!" Also: Jeff Jarrett, Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Bam Bam Bigelow, Hercules, Iron Sheik.

April 1989: Hulkamania Runs Wild Again! Can Randy Savage Stop The Onslaught? Also: British Bulldogs, Road Warriors-Sting & Luger, Lawler-Kerry, Andre, Mike Rotundo.

May 1989: Rick Steamboat—Champion; Rick Steamboat—Challenger: Which Is Better? Also: Sid Vicious, Dusty Rhodes, Savage-Hogan, Samoan Swat Team, Wendi Richter.

July 1989: Dino Bravo: The Man Hulk Hogan Cannot Beat! Also: Flair-Steamboat, Rhodes & Perez, Road Warriors & Ellering, Michael Hayes.

August 1989 (Special Issue): Supercard Sunday! Exclusive Coverage Of WrestleMania V And Clash Of Champions VI. Also: Kerry-Embry, Randy Savage, Great Muta, Ted DiBiase, Teddy Long.

September 1989: Our Urgent Plea To Ric Flair: Don't Wrestle Terry Funk. Also: Demolition, Roddy Piper, Hogan-Zeus, Larry Zbyszko, Jerry Lawler.

October 1989: No Holds Barred! Hogan & Beefcake vs. Savage & Zeus: An Exclusive Preview & Analysis. Also: Eric Embry, Four Horsemen, Teddy Long, Hayes-Luger, Art Barr, Billy Jack Haynes.

November 1989: Roddy Piper Pins Randy Savage ... And Hulk Hogan Is Scared Stiff! Also: Mr. T & Von Erichs, Garvin & Hayes, Flair-T. Funk, Dustin-Steel Man, Sgt. Slaughter.

December 1989: Gary Hart: "Muta Took The Sting Out Of Sting!" Also: Skyscrapers, Andre-Warrior, Barry Windham, Rock 'n' Rolls, Scott Norton, Ken Patera.

January 1990: The Hulk Hogan Book Of Lists. Also: Brian Pillman, Rich-Luger, Tully & Arn, P.Y. Chu-Hi, Greg Gagne.

February 1990: Can Sting Keep Luger From The NWA Belt? Also: Terry Gordy, Rick Martel, Hogan-Brown, Doom, Nikita Koloff, Bruce Hart.

March 1990: Funk-Flair: "I Quit!—One War Ends, Two More Begin. Also: Nikita Koloff, Survivor Series, Steiners, Hogan-Zeus, Jim Cornette.

April 1990: Hulk Hogan: A Decade Of Greatness. Also: Luger-Flair, Woman, Piper-Heenan, Billy Travis, Badd Company.

May 1990: Sting & Ultimate Warrior: Running A Parallel Course To Greatness. Also: Von Erichs, Big Bossman, Pillman & Zenk, Hulk Hogan, Mark Callous.

June 1990: Hulkamania—The Fall And Rise! Also: Rockers, Koloffs, Horsemen, Flair-Luger, Steiners.

July 1990: My 10 Challenges To Ric Flair, By Lex Luger. Also: Lanny Poffo, Dusty-Savage, Luger-Flair, Doom, Tully Blanchard.

August 1990: Hogan-Warrior II: You Can Make It Happen. Also: Eric Embry, Demolition, Doom, Larry Zbyszko.

September 1990: The Ultimate Warrior Wimps Out! Why He Won't Wrestle Hulk Hogan. Also: Billy Jack Haynes, Lex Luger, Doom-Steiners, Tugboat, Kerry-Borne.

October 1990: Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake: Exclusive SummerSlam Preview & Analysis. Also: Ultimate Warrior, Ric Flair, Tommy Rich, Tasmanian Devil, Chris Von Erich.

November 1990: The Luger-Sting Rivalry: Ready To Explode Again! Also: Lawler & Dundee, Brutus Beefcake, Kerry Von Erich, Harley Race, Steiners.

December 1990 (Special Issue): SummerSlam! Exclusive Full-Color Coverage! Also: Stan Hansen, Arn Anderson, Ultimate Warrior, Vic Steamboat, Scott Putski.

February 1991: The Incredible "Halloween Havoc Hoax"! Unraveling The Diabolical Plot. Also: Muta-Steamboat, Hogan-Hart, Ultimate Warrior, Cornette & Express, Norman.

March 1991: Warning To The Ultimate Warrior: Roddy Piper Wants You! Also: Gilbert-Jarrett, Cornette & Express, Teddy Long, Survivor Series, Scott Norton.

April 1991: Hulk Hogan: The Challenges That Remain. Also: Ted DiBiase, Skyscrapers, Lex Luger, Tom Zenk, Fabulous Ones.

May 1991: Only Hulk Hogan Can Rid The WWF Of The Stench Of Sgt. Slaughter. Also: Ric Flair, Bobby Eaton, Sheik-Brazil, Power & Glory, Terry Funk.

June 1991: How Much Longer Can We Depend On Hulk Hogan? Also: Nasty Boys, Sting, Flair-Gigante, Cactus Jack, Kevin Von Erich.

July 1991: Can Ric Flair Shatter The "Myth" Of Japanese Superiority? Also: Embry & Prichard, LOD-Nastys, Steiners, Savage & Elizabeth.

August 1991: If Sgt. Slaughter Said "I'm Sorry" ... Would Hulk And The World Forgive Him? Also: Luger-Nikita, Hennig-Davey Boy, Lanny Poffo, Bam Bam Bigelow.

September 1991: Sting & Luger vs. The Steiners: How Their Friendship Survived The Most Brutal Match Of The Year. Also: LOD, Cactus-Gilbert, Undertaker, Bobby Eaton, Sid Vicious.

October 1991 (Special Issue): 25 Years—The Silver Anniversary Celebration Of Wrestling's Most Respected Magazine. Includes: Year-By-Year, greatest photos, 25 greatest wrestlers, Q & A Bruno Sammartino.

November 1991: Lex Luger Wins

The Title—But Loses His Fans. Also: Rick Steamboat, Roddy Piper, Global, Diamond Studd, Lawler-Embry.
December 1991: Roddy Piper's Exclusive Analysis: Flair vs. Hogan—Who Will Win The Match Of The Century? Also: Sting, 25 greatest teams, Beverly, Cactus Jack.
January 1992: The LOD's Championship Catastrophe: Overpowered By The Natural Disasters. Also: Johnny B. Badd, Mr. Hughes, Jake Roberts, Ronnie Gossett.
February 1992: Shocking WWF Report: McMahon Offers Bounty On Flair—Will Vince Pay The Piper? Also: Ron Simmons, Tito Santana, Bob Backlund, R. Steiner-Abdullah.
March 1992: After Survivor Series & Tuesday In Texas: Has The WWF Title Suffered Irreparable Damage? Also: Brian Pillman, Anderson & Bruiser, Rude-Sting, Mountie-Hart, Jeff Jarrett.
May 1992: He Rumbled Past 29 Men ... Ric Flair's Hour Of Power: Can One Man Stop Him At WrestleMania VIII? Also: Anderson & Eaton, Roddy Piper, Dusty Rhodes, USWA, Don Owen.
June 1992: In Ric Flair's High-Stakes Championship Game, Hulk Hogan & Sid Justice Are Mere Pawns. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Ultimate Warrior, Vinnie Vegas, WCW titles, Koko B. Ware.
July 1992: "Number Two Just Won't Do": For Rick Rude, The U.S. Belt Means Failure: Also: Madusa, Gorilla Monsoon, LOD, Nurse Vanessa, Greg Valentine, Sabu.
August 1992: The Ultimate Warrior: WrestleMania's Accidental Hero. Also: Bunkhouse matches, Undertaker-Roberts, Sting, JYD, Rob Van Dam.
September 1992: Hey, Legion Of Doom—Go For The Title Or Go Away! Also: Repo-Crush, Mondo Kleen, Freebirds-Valentine & Taylor, Dangerous Alliance, Moondogs.
October 1992: British Bulldog & Ultimate Warrior: Why They'll Be Crowned At SummerSlam. Also: Scotty Flamingo, Brian Lee, Martel-Tatanka, Steve Austin, Sting.
November 1992: WWF Beware! It's The Perfect Time For A Curt Hennig Comeback! Also: Crush, Butch Reed, Sting, Buddy Rogers, Dan Spivey.
January 1993: Sting Turns Sadistic: "Hurting Jake Makes Me Happy!" Also: Anderson & Eaton, Bushwhackers-Moondogs, Ramon-Savage, Natural Disasters, Masa Chono.
February 1993: WWF Champion Bret Hart: His Five Most Dangerous Challenges. Also: Sgt. Slaughter, Steve Austin, Rick Steiner, Bob Backlund, Terry Taylor.
April 1993 What's In? What's Out? Also: Razor Ramon, Rick Steamboat, Patriot, Tatanka, Brian Christopher.
November 1993: Bret Hart vs. Lex Luger: It's Not Over Yet! Also: Rude-Dustin, Hulk Hogan, Marty Jannetty, Heavenly Bodies, Tatanka, Sherri Martel.
January 1994: Roasted, Broiled, Fried, Baked ... Any Way You Cook It, Hogan's A Chicken! Also: Rude-Flair, Bagwell & Scorpio, Jim Cornette, Jerry Lawler, Hansen & T. Funk-Abdullah & Sullivan.
April 1994: WCW Fans Demand: "We Want Hogan!" Why Their Plea May Soon Be Answered. Also: Crush-Savage, Ric Flair, Adam Bomb, The Boss, electric barbed wire.
May 1994: Aftershocks! How The Royal Rumble Shook Up WrestleMania. Also: Hulk Hogan, Boss, Douglas-Sherri, Patriot, improve WCW.
June 1994 (Special Issue): What's Your Wrestling IQ? Also: Brian Pillman, greatest matches, Missy-WCW, Steiners & Harts, Ron Simmons, Mr. Hughes, Doink.
July 1994: Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan: We Preview The Inevitable Battle. Also: Dreamer-Snuka, Jim Crockett's WWN, Ted DiBiase, Shane Douglas, Terra Ryzing.
August 1994: Bret's Nightmare Team Becomes A Reality: Owen Hart & Yokozuna. Also: Cactus-Vader, MOM, Flair-Badd, Nasty Boys, Luna Vachon.
September 1994 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report! Also: Big Van Vader, Parker-Hollywood Blonds, Sting-Rude, WWF legal problems, Prince Kharis, Bunkhouse-Rhodes, Public Enemy.
October 1994: The Undertaker: Two Bodies, One Soul. Also: Cactus Jack, Scorpio-Sabu, Terry Funk, Sheik, Bunkhouse Buck, Diesel-Michaels.
November 1994: Hulk Hogan's New Commandments: Say Prayers, Take Vitamins ... And Kick Butt! Also: Owen-Bret, Lord Steven Regal, Johnny B. Badd, Jerry Lawler, Mikey Whipwreck.
December 1994: Hulkster Under Siege! Can Hogan Hold Off WCW's Best? Also: Lex Luger, Sid Vicious, Steve Austin, Adam Bomb, Dusty Rhodes.
January 1995: Our Holiday Wish List For 1995. Also: Johnny B. Badd, DiBiase-Tatanka, Bob Backlund, PG-13, Hacksaw Duggan.
February 1995: Hulk's A Maniac! Why Vader Should Be Deathly Afraid Of Hogan. Also: Dangerously & Sabu, Skaaland & Luger, Steiners, Patriot-Bagwell, Undertaker-Vicious, Honky Tonk.
March 1995 (Special Issue): 1994—The Year In Pictures. Also: Sullivan-Hogan-Sullivan, WWF '95-WWF '85, Ric Flair, MOM, 911.
June 1995 (Special Issue): He's Barking ... And Ready To Bite: The British Bulldog Demands A Title Shot—Now! Also: Book Of Lists, Bubba Rogers, The Kid, Alex Wright, Rotten-Rotten, Avalanche.
July 1995: Hulk Hogan's Contract With America: Also: Marty Jannetty, Brian Pillman, Lawrence Taylor, Bill Dundee.
August 1995: Don't Let Their Cease-Fire Fool You: Shawn Still Hungers For Diesel's Title. Also: Lawrence Taylor, Tod Gordon, Hulk Hogan, powerful people, Gargoyle.
October 1995: President Backlund?! Also: Steiners, Austin & Pillman, Miss Texas, Gordon Solie.
November 1995: "Take That—And Shut Up!" If Savage Can't Silence Flair, He's Through! Also: Mabel, Jarrett-Ramon, Renegade, WWF legends roundtable.
December 1995 (Special Issue):"20Shawn Michaels: Too Good To Be Second Best! Also: Wrestling rulebook, Vega-Ramon, Mama Cornette, Kamala-Duggan, Big Van Vader.
March 1996 (Special Issue): 1995—The Year In Pictures. Also: Hogan-Hart, Big Van Vader, Sabu, Brian Pillman.
April 1996: Luger, Sting, Hogan, Savage: Can't We All Be Friends? Also: DiBiase & Kid, Diesel-McMahon, Dallas Page, Jeff Jarrett.
May 1996: WWF In-Vader! Can Bret, Shawn, & Razor Play The Pain Game? Also: Public Enemy, Steve Austin, wrestling oddities, Kensuke Sasaki, Ric Flair.
June 1996 (Special Issue): Fear Of Height! How The Giant Is Paralyzing Wrestling. Also: Shock 'n' Wrestling, Razor Ramon, Brian Pillman, Konnan.
July 1996: Babes In Boyland! Also: Sunny, Elizabeth, Kimberly, Inoki-Vader, WCW tag teams, Woman.
August 1996: Shawn Michaels: Finally—He Has The Title ... Now Here's What He's Gotta Do With It! Also: Public Enemy-Nastys, Bret Hart, Booty Man-Sullivan, Mabel.
September 1996 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report. Also: Savio Vega, Sabu-Scorpio, Chris Benoit, Goldust, Olympians, Giant.
October 1996: Muscling Back To The Top: The Warrior Is Ready To Rule Again. Also: Warriors & Sasaki-Steiners & Norton, Razor & Diesel, Mabel & Mo, Blue Meanie.
November 1996: Brian Pillman: Next WWF Champ! Also: Giant-Sting, Ray Stevens, Dick Murdoch, Cloudy, John Tenta, WCW shuffle.
December 1996 (Special Issue): WWF vs. WCW: Top 10 Faceoff! Also: Ahmed Johnson, Ric Flair, Mero & Sable, Goldust, Sandman.
Holiday 1996: WCW Shocker: Randy Savage Is Set To Join Hulk Hogan's NWO! Also: Steve Austin, Michaels-Goldust, Arn Anderson, Van Dam-Sabu, Steve Williams.
January 1997: It Could Happen! Hogan's Next Move ... Buy WCW! Also: Undertaker, New Jack, Owen-Bulldog, Ted DiBiase.
February 1997: Wrestling's Top Stars: What 1997 Has In Store For Them! Also: Michaels-Hart, Pit Bull I, Rey Misterio Jr., Kevin Nash.
March 1997 (Special Issue): 1996—The Year In Pictures. Also: Hulk Hogan, Austin-Pillman, Dallas Page, Hunter Hearst Helmsley.
April 1997: Sting: Who Screwed Up This Man's Mind? Also: Hart-Michaels, NWO, Sandman, Barry Windham.
May 1997: Hogan's Headache: The Pain Is Piper! And The Remedy Is Revenge! Also: Michaels-Hart, Guerreros, J.C. Ice, gang violence, Marc Mero.
June 1997 (Special Edition): Let Us Spray! When The Giant Goes Down ... Heaven Help WCW! Also: Toughest opponents, Sid-Bret-Shawn, Owen Hart, Raven.
July 1997: Infighting, Politics, Egos: Is The NWO Losing Its Edge? Also: WWF-ECW, Dean Malenko, Super 8 tourney, Jerry Lawler.
August 1997: Dream Match! Sting's Bat & The Side Of Hogan's Head! Also: Ahmed Johnson, Kimberly & DDP, WrestleMania sideshow, Jeff Jarrett, Jimmy Snuka.
September 1997 (Special Issue): WWF Midyear Report: Plus: NWO, Shawn-Bret, football players, Terry & Dory Funk, Luna Vacon.

THE WRESTLER

☐ NOV 76	☐ MAR 87	☐ MAY 90	☐ JUL 92	☐ AUG 95
☐ NOV 77	☐ APR 87	☐ JUN 90	☐ AUG 92	☐ OCT 95
☐ DEC 78	☐ JUL 87	☐ JUL 90	☐ SEP 92	☐ NOV 95
☐ MAR 79	☐ SEP 87	☐ AUG 90	☐ OCT 92	☐ DEC 95
☐ SEPT 80	☐ DEC 87	☐ SEP 90	☐ NOV 92	☐ MAR 96
☐ OCT 80	☐ FEB 88	☐ OCT 90	☐ JAN 93	☐ APR 96
☐ FEB 81	☐ MAR 88	☐ NOV 90	☐ FEB 93	☐ MAY 96
☐ JAN 82	☐ APR 88	☐ DEC 90	☐ APR 93	☐ JUN 96
☐ APR 82	☐ OCT 88	☐ FEB 91	☐ NOV 93	☐ JUL 96
☐ JUN 82	☐ JAN 89	☐ MAR 91	☐ JAN 94	☐ AUG 96
☐ JUL 82	☐ FEB 89	☐ APR 91	☐ APR 94	☐ SEP 96
☐ DEC 82	☐ MAR 89	☐ MAY 91	☐ MAY 94	☐ OCT 96
☐ FEB 83	☐ APR 89	☐ JUN 91	☐ JUN 94	☐ NOV 96
☐ JUL 83	☐ MAY 89	☐ JUL 91	☐ JUL 94	☐ DEC 96
☐ SEP 83	☐ JUL 89	☐ AUG 91	☐ AUG 94	☐ HOL 96
☐ JUN 84	☐ AUG 89	☐ SEP 91	☐ SEP 94	☐ JAN 97
☐ AUG 84	☐ SEP 89	☐ OCT 91	☐ OCT 94	☐ FEB 97
☐ SEP 84	☐ OCT 89	☐ NOV 91	☐ NOV 94	☐ MAR 97
☐ NOV 84	☐ NOV 89	☐ DEC 91	☐ DEC 94	☐ APR 97
☐ DEC 84	☐ DEC 89	☐ JAN 92	☐ JAN 95	☐ MAY 97
☐ JAN 85	☐ JAN 90	☐ FEB 92	☐ FEB 95	☐ JUN 97
☐ APR 85	☐ FEB 90	☐ MAR 92	☐ MAR 95	☐ JUL 97
☐ JUL 85	☐ MAR 90	☐ MAY 92	☐ JUN 95	☐ AUG 97
☐ OCT 85	☐ APR 90	☐ JUN 92	☐ JUL 95	☐ SEP 97

In case of a sellout, indicate substitute choice: _____

Please send me the back issues of THE WRESTLER I have checked off. I have enclosed $5 for each issue as payment in full or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum).

☐ Check or money order
(enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA #_____

☐ MasterCard #_____

Expiration Date: __/__
MO YR

Signature:_____

Name_____

Address _____ Apt._____

City_____

State_____ Zip _____

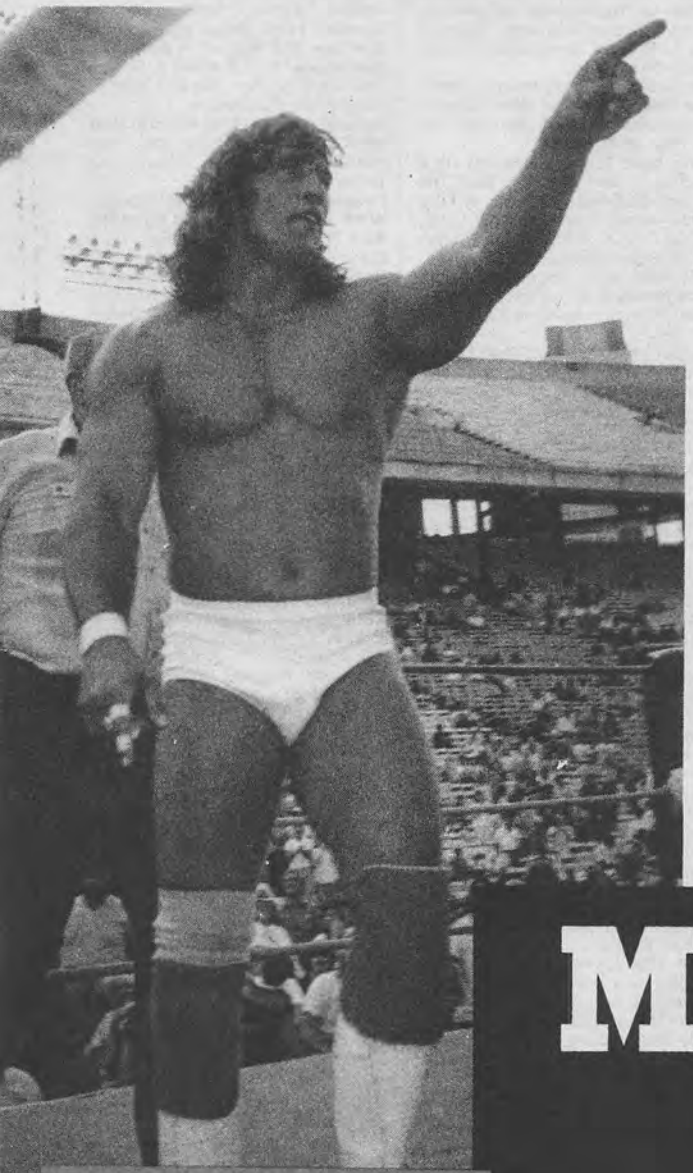
For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent boat mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

ONLY $5 EACH

Send To:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

4542/06-97

KERRY VON ERICH'S COMEBACK:



Kerry Von Erich (left) says he'll be back in the ring for good by Thanksgiving, and his fans couldn't be happier (above). But is "The Modern-Day Warrior" rushing things? Kerry doesn't think so.

MIRACLE OR MISTAKE?

WRESTLER *CLASSIC!*

We all know the tragic story of the Von Erich family by now. This "*Wrestler* Classic" from February 1988 details some of the adversity Kerry, who would go to commit suicide in 1993, faced

After Kerry Von Erich was injured in a horrible motorcycle accident in June 1986, doctors feared that his career was over. But Kerry battled the odds and the experts and will make his comeback on Thanksgiving in Dallas—a comeback he may live to regret!

Photos by Buddy Myers

EVER SINCE JUNE 4, 1986, the day that he suffered serious injuries in a motorcycle accident near his home town of Denton, Texas, Kerry Von Erich vowed that he would one day return to the ring. He swore that he would overcome the seemingly impossible odds, doctors' predictions, and his own body to make a victorious return.

Kerry tried to fulfill his vow last February, but his return was a one-time affair. A match against Von Erich family archrival Brian Adias turned into disaster as Kerry rebroke a bone in his heel and was forced to the sidelines once again. Months later, Kerry admitted he made a mistake by returning so soon. But, he explained, "I had to do it. I had to get Adias."

So why should this latest comeback be any different? Who can be so sure that when he meets Adias again on Thanksgiving at Dallas' Reunion Arena—Kerry Comeback II—we won't see a repeat of last February's fiasco, when Kerry spent most of the match limping around the ring like a three-legged dog? Do we really know that Kerry is ready for a comeback?

No. We *don't* know.

We do know, however, what Von Erich family doctors said about Kerry's injuries back in June 1986:

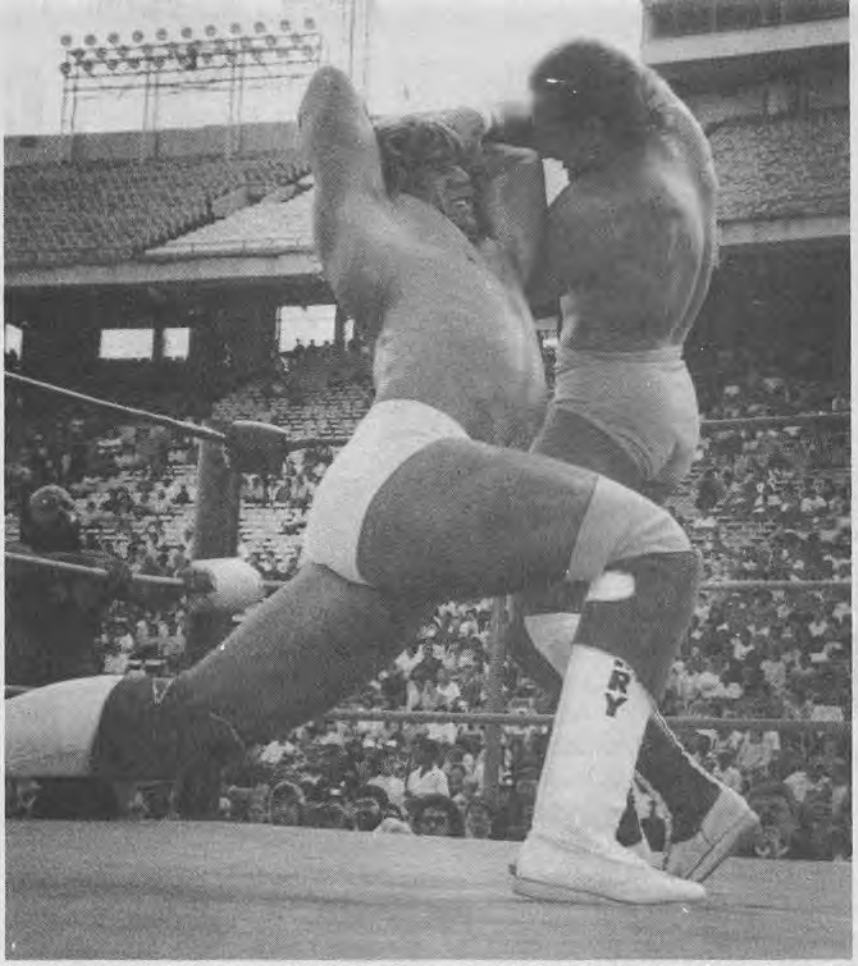
"It is indeed possible that Kerry will walk with a limp for the rest of his life and quite probable that his wrestling skills will be limited."

We also know what Kerry said just a month before his planned Thanksgiving return:

"We're back, full steam ahead. I'm back now better than I was before. When you love wrestling as much as I do, when somebody says you can't do it, you come back and do it."

But there's more tangible evidence that gives reason for concern about Kerry's comeback.

On October 17 at The Cotton Bowl in Dallas, Kerry had a sparring workout with three opponents:



Kerry spars with Frank Lancaster at The Cotton Bowl in Dallas (above). Instead of sparring like he was supposed to, Killer Brooks attacks Kerry, at Brian Adias' request (below). Adias has the most to lose from a Kerry comeback. Despite Kerry's long absence from the ring, their feud has raged on.

Matt Borne, Frankie Lancaster, and Killer Brooks. After two uneventful minutes with both Lancaster and Borne, Kerry had his hands full with Brooks. Under orders from Adias, Brooks tried to pummel Kerry. Von Erich battled back to hold off Brooks and sent Adias flying with a discus punch. Then Kerry was attacked by Adias as he returned to the dressing room. The two men had to be pulled apart by several wrestlers.

This only proved that the Kerry-Adias feud has not simmered down any in the weeks awaiting Kerry's comeback. But the report of *The Wrestler* Dallas correspondent Andrew Ray is worth paying attention to. "Kerry looked fine walking to the ring, but late in the third session and as he was walking back to the dressing room, Kerry was limping noticeably," reported Ray. "If that's how his ankle is going to respond to just five or six minutes in the ring, he might be risking severe injury by returning."

Most of the concern over Kerry centers around his right ankle; the dislocated hip and lacerated right knee he suffered in the accident are virtually back to normal. Days after the accident, doctors operated for over 15 hours to take a portion of muscle from his back and graft it to his right foot. Microscopic surgery was done to reestablish the blood vessels for proper circulation, then skin was taken from the hip and grafted over the wound. Prior to the micro-surgery, doctors feared that they might have to amputate Kerry's right foot because circulation was cut off.

But that wasn't the end of Kerry's problems with his right ankle. This past summer, 11 doctors were called in to Baylor Medical Center to perform a bone fusion on the ankle. "What they did was fuse two bones in the ankle together," explained Kerry. "We had doctors come in from all over the world for the surgery."

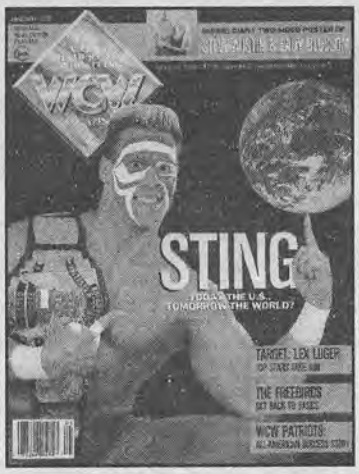
Kerry does not deny limping after the Cotton Bowl workout, but he claims that the ankle wasn't the cause. "It was my knee that bothered me," Kerry said. "A long time ago, I was wrestling Ric Flair a lot and his figure-four leglock messed up my knee real bad. That, combined with all the years I played football and when I threw the discus, beat up my knee real bad. What happened now is the muscles are still weak around that knee from taking a year-and-a-half off. Once I start getting more active, it shouldn't be any problem. As for my right ankle, it feels no different than the other one."

Whether the ankle holds up under the pressure of nightly competition remains to be seen. Kerry claims that Tony Dorsett, star running back of the Dallas Cowboys football team, also has a fused ankle. "It's pretty common surgery for athletes," says Kerry. Dorsett, however, did not undergo microsurgery and was never in danger of having his right foot amputated. He also didn't sit out nearly a year-and-a-half. And he didn't have an attempted comeback curtailed along the way.

Kerry Von Erich has already overcome the odds by making a remarkable recovery from the accident. Through perseverance and dedication, he has reached the point where an attempted comeback is feasible. Still, the tragic recent history of his family is enough to make anyone nervous whenever a Von Erich attempts something risky. Coming back to such a challenging sport after 18 months on the sidelines is not easy.

It becomes even tougher when one considers that Adias, Al Perez, and others are waiting in the wings, ready to put Kerry back on the disabled list. Soon, we will know whether Kerry's comeback is a miracle or mistake. Right now, we only know the price he might have to pay. □

Before the sparring session, Kerry talks with his father Fritz (top). Kerry is at ringside as Kevin wrestles Al Perez for the World Class title (below). Kevin won the belt back, but was stripped of it because of Kerry's interference.



JUST FOUND!

BACK ISSUES OF THE ORIGINAL WCW MAGAZINE

Collectors agree that the early issues of WCW MAGAZINE were some of the most superb wrestling magazines ever published. Until recently, these magazines had been neatly stored in an air-controlled warehouse. Now, once again, they are available to the public!

NOVEMBER 1991*
Cover: Steiners & Gigante
Poster: Lex Luger

DECEMBER 1991*
Cover: Lex Luger
Poster: Sting

JANUARY 1992*
Cover: Sting
Poster: Steve Austin & Lady Blossom

FEBRUARY 1992*
Cover: Special Holiday Issue!
Poster: 1992 calendar/wrestlers' birthdays

MARCH 1992*
Cover: 1991 awards/year in review
Poster: Dustin Rhodes

MAY 1992*
Cover: Steiners
Poster: Brian Pillman

JUNE 1992*
Cover: Sting's Army vs. Dangerous Alliance
Poster: Rick Steamboat

JULY 1992*
Cover: Sting
Poster: Rick Rude

AUGUST 1992*
Cover: Big Van Vader
Poster: Paul E. Dangerously dartboard

SEPTEMBER 1992*
Cover: Nikita Koloff vs. Rick Rude
Poster: Rick Rude/Missy Hyatt

OCTOBER 1992*
Cover: Williams & Gordy vs. Steiners
Poster: Barry Windham

NOVEMBER 1992*
Cover: Ron Simmons
Poster: Madusa

DECEMBER 1992*
Cover: Jake Roberts
Poster: Nikita Koloff

JANUARY 1993*
Cover: Brian Pillman
Poster: Ron Simmons

FEBRUARY 1993*
Cover: Starrcade '92
Poster: Sting

MARCH 1993*
Cover: 1992 awards/year in review
Poster: 1993 calendar/WCW history

APRIL 1993*
Cover: Rick Rude & Madusa
Poster: 2 Cold Scorpio

JULY 1993*
Cover: Sting
Poster: Big Van Vader

OCTOBER 1993*
Cover: War Games preview
Poster: Johnny B. Badd

NOVEMBER 1993*
Cover: Halloween Havoc preview
Plus: Nastys, Rude, U.K. tour

DECEMBER 1993*
Cover: Battle Bowl preview
Plus: Dustin, Horsemen, Clash

JANUARY 1994
Interview special: Nastys, Sting, Rude, Vader, Dustin

FEBRUARY 1994
Cover: Ric Flair
Plus: Steamboat, Havoc, Payne

MARCH 1994
Year-end awards: Flair, Vader, Rude, Bagwell & Scorpio, more!

MAY 1994
Cover: Bobby Heenan's WCW Guide
Plus: Boss, Orndorff & Roma

JUNE 1994
Cover: Spring Stampede Preview
Plus: Simmons, Arn, Nastys, Badd

JULY 1994
Cover: Sting
Plus: Flair, Nastys, Vader-Jack

COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL #1*
Eight giant 32" x 22" posters

COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL #4*
Powerpix! Sting, Vader, Pillman, Austin, more!

COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL #5*
Puzzles & Games—cross-words, trivia quizes, more!

*** ALL SLICK, ALL COLOR!**

Please send me the back issues I have checked below. I have enclosed $5 check or money order for each copy ordered.

WCW MAGAZINE

- ❑ NOVEMBER 1991
- ❑ DECEMBER 1991
- ❑ JANUARY 1992
- ❑ FEBRUARY 1992
- ❑ MARCH 1992
- ❑ MAY 1992
- ❑ JUNE 1992
- ❑ JULY 1992
- ❑ AUGUST 1992
- ❑ SEPTEMBER 1992
- ❑ OCTOBER 1992
- ❑ NOVEMBER 1992
- ❑ DECEMBER 1992
- ❑ JANUARY 1993
- ❑ FEBRUARY 1993
- ❑ MARCH 1993
- ❑ APRIL 1993
- ❑ JULY 1993
- ❑ OCTOBER 1993
- ❑ NOVEMBER 1993
- ❑ DECEMBER 1993
- ❑ JANUARY 1994
- ❑ FEBRUARY 1994
- ❑ MARCH 1994
- ❑ MAY 1994
- ❑ JUNE 1994
- ❑ JULY 1994
- ❑ SPECIAL #1
- ❑ SPECIAL #4
- ❑ SPECIAL #5

Supplies are limited, So don't delay- Order today!

Make check or money order payable to

LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
And send to:
WCW BACK ISSUE DEPARTMENT
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Name .....

Address ..... Apt. .....

City .....

State ..... Zip .....

Offer good in U.S. only. Canada and all other countries $7 per issue.
International money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

4479/02-97

THE Wrestler

TOP 10

1 BRET HART
235, Calgary, Alberta
(1) WWF World champion

2 CURT HENNIG
235, Minneapolis, MN
(2) U.S. heavyweight champion

3 THE UNDERTAKER
328, parts unknown
(3) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

4 REY MISTERIO JR.
140, San Diego, CA
(-) WCW cruiserweight champion

5 LEX LUGER
265, Chicago, IL
(4) No. 5 contender: WCW World title

6 BAM BAM BIGELOW
368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
(-) ECW heavyweight champion

7 KEN SHAMROCK
235, San Bernardino, CA
(-) No. 4 contender: WWF World title

8 DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE
260, Tampa, FL
(8) No. 9 contender: WCW World title

9 OWEN HART
227, Calgary, Alberta
(5) WWF Intercontinental champion

10 EDDY GUERRERO
221, El Paso, TX
(7) No. 1 contender: WCW cruiserweight title

Bret Hart

TAG TEAMS

1 RICK & SCOTT STEINER
Combined weight: 483 pounds
(-) WCW World tag team champions

2 THE ROAD WARRIORS
Combined weight: 560 pounds
(5) WWF World tag team champions

3 MASA CHONO & KEIJI MUTO
Combined weight: 480 pounds
(-) IWGP tag team champions

4 HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY & SHAWN MICHAELS
Combined weight: 513 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

5 HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN
Combined weight: 531 pounds
(1) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

6 LITTLE GUIDO & TRACEY SMOTHERS
Combined weight: 448 pounds
(-) ECW tag team champions

7 THE HEADBANGERS
Combined weight: 488 pounds
(3) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

8 JOHN KRONUS & NEW JACK
Combined weight: 481 pounds
(6) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

9 OWEN HART & DAVEY BOY SMITH
Combined weight: 472 pounds
(-) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

10 MIGUEL PEREZ & SAVIO VEGA
Combined weight: 482 pounds
(-) No. 5 contenders: WWF World tag title

WCW

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1—CURT HENNIG
(1) 235, Minneapolis, MN
2—REY MISTERIO JR.
(-) 140, San Diego, CA
3—RODDY PIPER
(-) 247, Glasgow, Scotland
4—EDDY GUERRERO
(3) 221, El Paso, TX
5—LEX LUGER
(2) 265, Chicago, IL
6—RANDY SAVAGE
(8) 237, Sarasota, FL
7—SCOTT HALL
(-) 290, Miami, FL
8—RIC FLAIR
(-) 243, Charlotte, NC
9—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE
(5) 260, Tampa, FL
10—JACQUELYN
(-) 130, Dallas, TX

WWF

World Champion:
BRET HART
(C) 235, Calgary, Alberta

1—OWEN HART
(1) 227, Calgary, Alberta
2—STEVE AUSTIN
(-) 241, Dallas, TX
3—THE UNDERTAKER
(2) 328, parts unknown
4—KEN SHAMROCK
(-) 235, San Bernardino, CA
5—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY
(6) 279, Greenwich, CT
6—DUDE LOVE
(5) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
7—JERRY LAWLER
(-) 234, Memphis, TN
8—GOLDUST
(8) 254, Austin, TX
9—BIG VAN VADER
(9) 450, Denver, CO
10—MARC MERO
(7) 235, Buffalo, NY

NWA

NWA Champion:
DAN SEVERN
(C) 265, Detroit, MI

1—DORY FUNK JR.
(-) 250, Amarillo, TX
2—ACE DARLING
(-) 225, Atlantic City, NJ
3—DEVON STORM
(-) 232, Pacific Palisades, CA
4—RECKLESS YOUTH
(-) 203, Babylon, NY
5—KING KONG BUNDY
(-) 446, Atlantic City, NJ
6—JIMMY CICERO
(-) 245, New York, NY
7—GREG VALENTINE
(-) 243, Seattle, WA
8—STEVE KEIRN
(-) 235, Tampa, FL
9—STEVE CORINO
(-) 201, Raeford, NC
10—JOEY MATTHEWS
(-) 218, Charlotte, NC

ECW

ECW Champion:
BAM BAM BIGELOW
(4) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ

1—TAZ
(1) 248, Red Hook, NY
2—SHANE DOUGLAS
(C) 240, Pittsburgh, PA
3—ROB VAN DAM
(5) 240, Battle Creek, MI
4—SABU
(2) 225, Bombay
5—CHRIS CANDIDO
(3) 226, Carteret, NJ
6—TOMMY DREAMER
(-) 245, Yonkers, NY
7—AL SNOW
(-) 232, Lima, OH
8—JOHN KRONUS
(-) 256, Cleveland, OH
9—PAUL DIAMOND
(-) 243, Minneapolis, MN
10—MIKEY WHIPWRECK
(-) 187, New York, NY

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, thesecumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—THE UNDERTAKER ....85 points
2—LEX LUGER ....81 points
3—BRET HART ....63 points
4—STEVE AUSTIN ....37 points
5—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE ....30 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE ROAD WARRIORS ....70 points
2—RICK & SCOTT STEINER ....63 points
3—OWEN HART & DAVEY BOY SMITH ....58 points
4—THE GIANT & LEX LUGER ....58 points
5—SCOTT HALL & KEVIN NASH ....55 points

For period ended October 31, 1997

ALL-PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Michael Modest; 1—Robert Thompson; 2—Erin O'Grady; 3—Max Justice; 4—Vic Grimes; 5—Steve Rizzono; 6—Donovan Morgan; 7—Tony Jones; 8—Boom Boom Comini; 9—Chris Cole; 10—Dic Grimes.

CENTURY WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Abdullah The Butcher; 2—Tony Atlas; 3—Tony Rumble; 4—Vic Steamboat; 5—Knuckles Nelson; 6—Joel Davis; 7—Kevin Sullivan; 8—Ace Darling; 9—Devon Storm; 10—Pink Assassin.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—Glen Osbourne; 1—Mankind; 2—Cheetah Master; 3—Ace Darling; 4—Lance Diamond; 5—Reckless Youth; 6—Boogie Woogie Brown; 7—Devon Storm; 8—Mike Quackenbush; 9—Mr. Ooh La La; 10—Gino Caruso.

MUSIC CITY WRESTLING: Champion—Colorado Kid; 1—Flash Flanagan; 2—Doug Gilbert; 3—Billy Travis; 4—Frenchie Riviera; 5—Shane Eden; 6—Wolfie D; 7—Terry Golden; 8—Brickhouse Brown; 9—Nick Dinsmore; 10—Scufflin' Hillbilly.

NEW DIMENSION WRESTLING: Champion—Rick Link; 1—Rick Morton; 2—Bobby Fulton; 3—Manny Fernandez; 4—Pez Whatley; 5—Ken Spence; 6—Mr. Excellent; 7—Roger Anderson; 8—Frank Parker; 9—Jack Spade; 10—Venom.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Cheetah Master; 1—Ace Darling; 2—Mike Quackenbush; 3—Reckless Youth; 4—Bart Gunn; 5—Spellbinder; 6—Tiger Khan; 7—Glen Osbourne; 8—Lance Diamond; 9—Boogie Woogie Brown; 10—Steven Dunn.

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION: Champion—Italian Stallion; 1—George South; 2—Madd Maxxine; 3—Rick Morton; 4—Terry Austin; 5—Chris Hamrick; 6—Gladiator II; 7—Flaming Youth; 8—Cruel Connection II; 9—Wasted Youth; 10—Dr. Feelgood.

WORLD WRESTLING COUNCIL: Champion—Ray Gonzalez; 1—Carlos Colon; 2—Ricky Santana; 3—Invader I; 4—Dutch Mantel; 5—Justin Bradshaw; 6—La Ley; 7—Black Feather; 8—Shane; 9—Skull Von Crush; 10—Halcon Negro.

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:
KENSUKE SASAKI
(C) 233, Tokyo, Japan

1—SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(1) 287, Gifu, Japan
2—KEIJI MUTO
(2) 245, Yamanashi, Japan
3—MASA CHONO
(3) 235, Tokyo, Japan
4—HIROYOSHI TENZAN
(6) 270, Tokyo, Japan
5—RIKI CHOSHU
(5) 246, Tokuyama, Japan
6—NAOYA OGAWA
(-) 286, Tokyo, Japan
7—SHINJIRO OTANI
(-) 215, Yokohama, Japan
8—JUSHIN LIGER
(7) 206, Hiroshima, Japan
9—KOJI KANEMOTO
(8) 205, Osaka, Japan
10—IMPOSTOR STING
(9) 251, parts unknown

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:
MITSUHARU MISAWA
(C) 228, Ashikaga, Japan

1—KENTA KOBASHI
(2) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan
2—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(1) 245, Ashikaga, Japan
3—STEVE WILLIAMS
(7) 265, Norman, OK
4—JUN AKIYAMA
(8) 230, Hiroshima, Japan
5—AKIRA TAUE
(3) 265, Chichibu, Japan
6—GARY ALBRIGHT
(9) 343, Billings, MT
7—JOHNNY ACE
(6) 250, San Bernardino, CA
8—TAKAO OMORI
(10) 221, Tokyo, Japan
9—MAUNAKEA MOSSMAN
(4) 245, Honolulu, HI
10—YOSHINARI OGAWA
(-) 202, Tokyo, Japan

EMLL

EMLL Champion:
TITLE VACANT

1—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.
(-) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico
2—CIEN CARAS
(7) 235, Lagos de Moreno, Mexico
3—UNIVERSO 2000
(-) 215, parts unknown
4—ULTIMO DRAGON
(3) 175, Mexico City, Mexico
5—BLACK WARRIOR
(-) 221, Mexico City, Mexico
6—LIZMARK JR.
(-) 214, Mexico City, Mexico
7—ATLANTIS
(8) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico
8—EL HIJO DEL SANTO
(2) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico
9—NEGRO CASAS
(1) 175, Mexico City, Mexico
10—EMILIO CHARLES JR.
(-) 222, Mexico City, Mexico

PROMO AZTECA

Promo Azteca Champion:
KONNAN
(C) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

1—REY MISTERIO JR.
(6) 140, San Diego, CA
2—PIERROTH JR.
(9) 240, Mexico City, Mexico
3—LA PARKA
(1) 235, Torreon, Mexico
4—TINIEBLAS JR.
(-) 219, Guadalajara, Mexico
5—STEELE
(7) 250, Winnipeg, Manitoba
6—PSICOSIS
(3) 200, Tijuana, Mexico
7—JUVENTUD GUERRERA
(5) 165, Mexico City, Mexico
8—HECTOR GARZA
(4) 215, Monterrey, CA
9—DANDY
(10) 190, Guadalajara, Mexico
10—SILVER KING
(-) 215, Mexico City, Mexico

Ratings ANALYSIS

"The Beast" rears his bald head. Were you one of the many people who thought **Bam Bam Bigelow** would never be the same after he was pinned in shocking fashion by former NFL star **Lawrence Taylor** at WrestleMania XI in 1995? "The Beast From The East" left the WWF at the end of '95, and it wasn't until 1997 that he decided ECW was the place for him.

Bam Bam Bigelow

Now, by virtue of a decisive victory over **Shane Douglas** on October 16 in Elmhurst, New York, he's the heavyweight champion of ECW and he has **Rick Rude** as an adviser. So he's clearly doing very well. Will he able to hold on to the ECW belt for a long time? That'd be a difficult task for any wrestler, but since joining ECW full-time, Bam Bam has shown he can be as tough as any wrestler in that federation. He was positively vicious in some matches with **Pit Bull II** and **Spike Dudley** this summer.

For now, he gets the number six spot in the Top 10. If he beats other worthy opponents as decisively as he beat Shane, he could move up next issue. As for Douglas, well, he has to again prove to us that he is deserving of a spot on that list.

No "Double-J" ... er, Jeff Jarrett. **Jeff Jarrett's** return to the WWF in October certainly was memorable, wasn't it? He harshly criticized both **Vince McMahon** and **Eric Bischoff** on a live WWF telecast. But he doesn't make the WWF ratings this month, because, obviously, he only just returned and hadn't won many big WWF matches as of press time.

We have a feeling, however, that he'll be near the top within a few months and probably back in the Top 10 as well. Jarrett is a former WWF, WCW U.S., and USWA heavyweight champion. But despite all the success he had in the past few years, he always seemed overly concerned with showing off for the fans and boasting about how great he was (especially when he called himself "Double-J" during his first stay in the WWF).

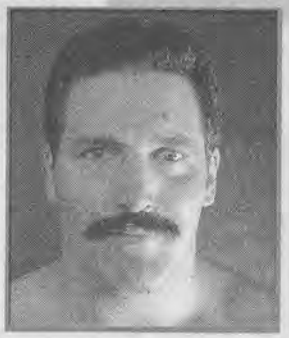
It was obvious from the tone he took when he addressed McMahon on October 20 that Jarrett plans to be a lot more serious about wrestling from here on. Perhaps he's finally on his way to winning his first world title.

Big changes! Big changes! If you have already looked closely at page 65, you'll notice that there are no USWA ratings in this issue. There's a good chance you'll never see USWA ratings in this magazine—or any of its sister publications—again. At press time, the federation was involved in a legal mess in which a man named **Mark Selker**, who purchased 50 percent of the company from **Jerry Lawler**, filed a lawsuit against Lawler and **Larry Burton**, the man to whom Lawler previously sold the other 50 percent.

The suit alleges that Lawler and Burton made a false representation of facts during the sale and thus inflated the value of the company.

In the meantime, the USWA stopped running cards. If the promotion does start up again, we will put it back on our ratings page. For the time being, however, we have decided to rotate various independents into the spot previously occupied by the USWA.

In this issue, we're featuring the New Jersey-based National Wrestling Alliance. **Dan Severn's** name is atop the ratings there, as Severn has held the NWA heavyweight title since way back in February 1995, when he beat **Chris Candido** for the belt on a Smoky Mountain Wrestling card in Kentucky. Severn rarely defends the belt, but he is still recognized as champion. Some other NWA regulars are **Reckless Youth** (the reigning NWA North American champ), **Ace Darling**, **Lance Diamond**, **Buddy Landell**, and **Devon Storm**.

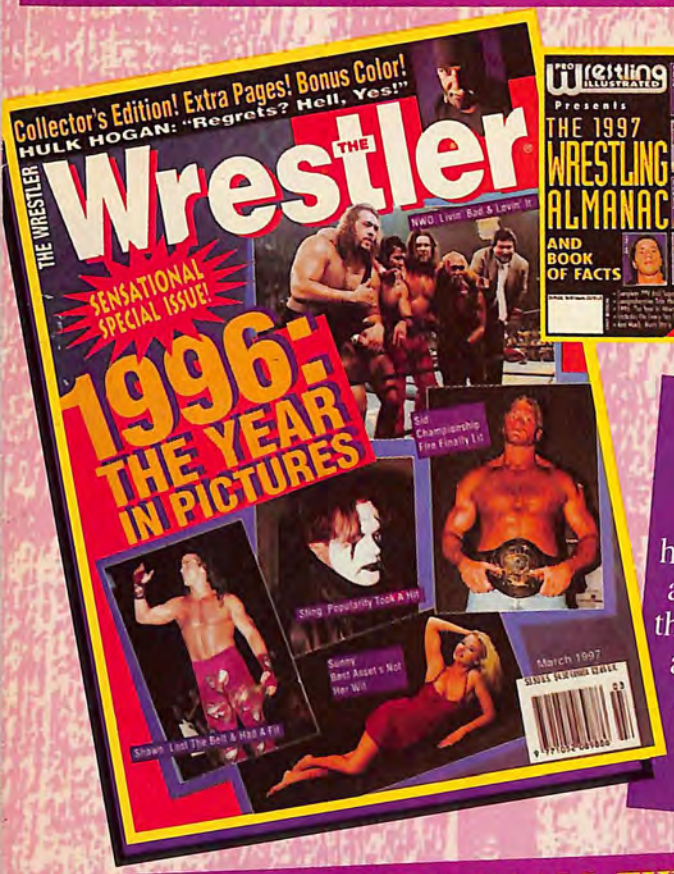


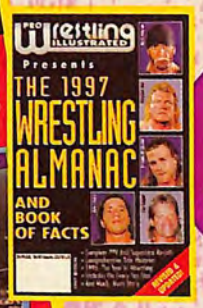
Dan Severn

Look for Music City Wrestling's ratings to appear in that spot sometime in the near future. Many former USWA stars have begun wrestling for the new promotion, which runs shows in many of the towns that used to host USWA shows on a regular basis. □

That's all for this month! If you have any questions or comments relating to our ratings, don't hesitate to contact us. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o The Wrestler, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

SUBSCRIBE TO *THE WRESTLER* ... AND RECEIVE THE *PWI* ALMANAC FREE!





That's right! The 196-page, digest-sized 1997 edition of the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Almanac*, complete with title histories, 1996 in review, statistics on wrestlers worldwide, and complete supercard results, is yours free when you subscribe to THE WRESTLER, using the order form on this page!

For three decades, **THE WRESTLER** has kept fans informed about every aspect of the mat sport! Become a subscriber today—and save up to 25% off the newsstand price!

- **More full-length articles than any other wrestling magazine anywhere!**
- **Quarterly special issues—featuring sensational full-color sections!**
- **An exclusive "Q & A" interview with one of wrestling's top stars!**
- **"You Asked Us," in which top stars answer YOUR questions!**
- **Cheers and jeers to those who deserve them most in "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down"!**
- **"Introducing" a dynamic up-and-coming young star!**
- **A "Spotlight" photo feature on the career of one of the mat's superstars!**
- **On a rotating bimonthly basis: "Beyond The Squared Circle," featuring candid photos of your favorite stars, and "Matt Brock's Looking Back," in which the veteran reporter examines yesteryear's mat classics!**
- **All this—and much, much more!—every four weeks!**

GET IN ON ALL THE ACTION!

Now, with two different ways to subscribe, getting *THE WRESTLER* delivered to your home each month is easier than ever!

- **Get 13 issues of THE WRESTLER for $29.20—a 20% savings off the newsstand price!**
- **Get 26 issues of THE WRESTLER for $54.75—a 25% savings off the newsstand price!**

Send to:

London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

☑ Yes, I would like to subscribe to THE WRESTLER

☐ I am enclosing $29.20 for a 13-issue subscription

☐ I am enclosing $54.75 for a 26-issue subscription

☐ I wish to receive the *1997 PWI Almanac* as a bonus to my subscription and have enclosed $2 to cover postage and handling.

☐ I would like to order the *1997 PWI Almanac* only and have enclosed $7.00 as payment in full.

☐ NEW ☐ RENEWAL

Name_____

Address_____ Apt._____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order
(enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard # _____

Expiration date: ____/____
MO / YR

Signature:_____

Price offer good in U.S. only. Canada and all other countries: $39.60 for 13 issues ($61.70 airmail), and $75.55 for 26 issues ($119.75 airmail).
For all orders outside U.S., international money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow up to eight weeks before you receive your first issue.

4509/01-97

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

UPDATED EVERY WEEKDAY AND AFTER PAY-PER-VIEW EVENTS

HOTLINE

HOSTED BY SENIOR EDITOR BILL APTER

When it comes to wrestling, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* magazine has all the inside information you want and it's only a phone call away.

If it happens in the ring, the locker room, or on the road, you'll hear it here first.

To get all the breaking stories from every federation, call the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Hotline now and you'll be the first to learn about ...

Exclusive news from behind the scenes
Upcoming events
Up-to-date results from around the world
Title changes and transactions
Pay-per-view reports
Wrestler of the week
Exclusive scouting reports
Plus . . . Tell the editors of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* what you want to see in the magazine. Dictate a letter to the Editor-in-Chief. Selected letters will be printed in *Pro Wrestling Illustrated.*

CALL NOW

IN THE U.S., 1-900-884-4PWI
IN CANADA, 1-900-451-3101
IN THE U.K., 0897 555 263

This service is available on both touch-tone and rotary-dial phones.
*Cost per minute in the United States is $1.99. Cost per minute Canada is $2.49. Cost per minute in the United Kingdom is £1.00.
Kids, get your parents' permission.
BCM Box 6424, London WC1N 3XX

IN THE U.S., 1-900-884-4PWI
IN CANADA, 1-900-451-3101
IN THE U.K., 0897 555 263

4457/08-97